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THE PHARAOHS
OF THE
BONDAGE AND THE EXODUS.

THE PHARAOHS OF THE BONDAGE AND THE EXODUS

LECTURES BY

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O.T. Exodus
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PREFACE.

These lectures were all delivered by a pastor in the ordinary course of pulpit ministration upon the Sabbath. They are published in the form they first received. This will explain some repetitions, and show reason for some passages of direct religious address.

Much of the writer's work in them has been that of compilation. The facts are brought from all the sources of information he could obtain. He could not load his lectures nor bulk his book with lengthy citations; but everything here given to the public is carefully stated, and behind it all are to be named authorities of the highest character. As yet the information from Egypt rests in a hundred scattered official reports, voluminous histories, review articles, together with letters to the English, French, and German press. To collect and collate this has been a task of the greatest labor, and every help has been employed that was within reach in order to accuracy and expedition.

The worst trouble of all has been found in the absolute disagreement and antagonism of the supreme authorities themselves. Many questions are still

mooted, and some will remain unsettled till time shall bring new discoveries from the rock-tombs along the banks of the Nile.

The Egypt Exploration Fund Association is doing a great and good work; it ought to have a wider and more vigorous support. The writer of these discourses wishes sincerely that even this small book may aid in calling attention to it, and in kindling interest in it, so that larger expeditions may be sent forth, and fresh achievements made.

CHAS. S. ROBINSON.

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church,
New-York, March 1, 1887.

THE PHARAOHS OF THE BONDAGE AND THE EXODUS.

I

THE MODERN LAND OF EGYPT.

I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia.
— Ezekiel xxix. 10.

IN the winter of 1880, while in the ordinary course of pulpit duty, I commenced a series of lectures upon the Bondage in Egypt, intending to take up at some subsequent time another series upon the Wandering in the Wilderness. This plan was carried out in no conspicuous or unusual way; and I only mention the fact in order to show that naturally my mind was very much on the alert for information when, the spring following, I went to England for the customary vacation granted to the somewhat overworked pastors and professors in New-York.

Almost immediately upon my arrival in London, I found the entire town excited by the report

of a strange "find" of mummies in an out-of-the-way sepulcher somewhere on the banks of the Upper Nile. It was in the telegraphic dispatches given to the press generally; and the account stated that forty or fifty Pharaohs had been discovered piled in one rock-cave among the hills, the cartouches and inscriptions showing beyond contradiction that they were the bodies of the greatest of monarchs in all the dynasties of ancient Egypt. Soon there came letters and further dispatches, and then something like orderly descriptions.

It was evident that there had been opened a fresh chapter in the history of that hitherto almost silent land. But time would be needed to verify and establish conclusions. The very contradictions that the journals published day by day showed almost amusingly how little could be trusted until after the wise men who understood such things had the chance for careful and close examination of the coffins with the papyri, the records of the priests, and the shrouds of the mummies, so that an intelligible and consistent report could be made to the world.

All I could do was to wait. I collected every scrap of published information as I found it in the magazines and the newspapers; and the consciousness that my lectures on the Exodus could not proceed till an orderly classification of events should have been made rendered me patient in procedure. In the summer of the next year, 1882, being again in London, I found that the official documents had

already begun to arrive; some of the newer books had taken the items into discussion; the historians and archæologists had been studying the papyri; indeed, the whole advancement made had been rapid and accurate. Then for the next three seasons I kept collecting books of illustrations and photographs of objects, till my table was loaded with helps and suggestions, ready for use. So at last I propose now to move on with my course of Exodus expositions, following the general plan with which I first started.

Before taking up the plain text of the Scripture, it seems to be necessary for me to give a succinct account of what the discoveries have been. I should like to familiarize your minds with certain features of modern geography and life in Egypt, this old, strange land that has buried in it so much mystery. To-night I propose to sketch briefly some incidents of the visit we made in the neighborhood just before.

There is no use in denying it, the land of the Pharaohs makes a very poor show from the offing. Far as the weary eye can reach, that dirty-white beach extends, flat and tame, with but one variegation to suggest a thought or invite a question. Pompey's Pillar — which, by the way, never had anything to do with Pompey — lifts its fine shaft conspicuously a little distance back, as if just to call one's mind to the remembrance of how much grander the old times were than these are.

For a while in history Alexandria was really the chief of all commercial centers. Nineveh had been destroyed, and Babylon was fallen. Then it bore the lofty name of the "City of Cities," and was called the "Queen of the East." Now a confused huddle of houses and a ruined multitude of refuse people of all nations alone mark the desolate spot. Probably sixty or seventy thousand inhabitants eke out a miserable existence in the neighborhood, finding occupation for the most part in conveying travelers by "the overland route" through the country. Since the opening of the Suez Canal, however, and the extension of the railway systems, a good deal of wealth has come into the city and its suburbs. The guide-books for tourists estimate the whole population at two hundred thousand, of which multitude near fifty thousand are Europeans.

What interested us more than anything else was the historical form of associations which surround this ancient city. Certain secular names come in contact with others definitely scriptural and religious.

Apollos was a citizen of Alexandria; and the day was when some people thought he was a better preacher than Paul. The ecclesiastical historian Origen began his commentaries in these once scholastic precincts. Here the motto was earliest raised, "Athanasius against the world"— for here, during forty-six fierce years of conflict, did the brave old schoolman defend "the faith once delivered to

the saints." Here, too, was laid the scene of sorrowful persecution, when the pen of eternal record had to write the tales of horror concerning the Jews. In fearful tragedies of blood was fulfilled the ancient prophecy, which declared that God's chosen people should, one day, "tremble as a bird out of Egypt."

Long and intricate is the story of Alexandria's glory and shame. Only the remnants of its grandeur are left to prove its present desolation. Alas, who can conceive, as he passes the wretched hovels in which camel, dog, and donkey dwell on equal terms with human beings, such as we saw a hundred times in a day, that here at the time when a lighthouse, reckoned one of the seven wonders of the world, was shining at the entrance of the harbor, a library of seven hundred thousand volumes was offering the beams of its intelligence to a race bewildered, each book in that typeless age worth more than its weight in gold! All these were burnt by the Saracens in a single sweep of the torch.

Three names will always be linked with memories of Alexandria. One has been mentioned — Apollos, the early preacher of the faith. Then there was a bright young man called Mark, whom God inspired in after years to write one of the Gospels. The history of all those times is confused, and there is no knowing precisely how much of what is called this evangelist's biography may be believed. It has been asserted that he was horribly

martyred in these precincts; that he was seized during divine service, bound, beaten, then dragged with cords through the roadways and over the most craggy places of the cliff by the sea; that he was remanded to prison, whence an angel appeared in a midnight vision strengthening him; the next day after, he was dragged again until the flesh was torn from his bones, and his suffering spirit took its flight; then the excited populace burned his body, leaving only a few charred fragments, which his Christian fellow-workers cautiously gathered up for decent interment. All this staggers one's belief, when the evidence is so slight, and the mind of the student so unwilling.

There was yet a third young man, the fortunes of whose life culminated at Alexandria. That imperial soldier, who gave his own name to the city, died at Babylon; but tradition claims he was buried here. At thirty years of age Alexander had subdued all the nations and was weeping that he had no more worlds to conquer. And not far from the same time of life, John Mark was recording the question, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Alexander was "great" in human exploits; Apollos was "mighty in the Scriptures." The one turned many to righteousness; the other is remembered only "to point a moral and adorn a tale."

We stood thoughtfully by the spot where they say (without much accuracy) Alexander was buried.

He was laid in the grave in a coffin of gold; that was put in an encasement of glass; and that was surrounded with a sarcophagus of stone. But the stone has been crushed, the glass shattered, the gold rifled, the body lost, and the exact grave forgotten. So it seems it does not matter much how one is interred. And, on the whole, the reflection is most salutary when we remember that not the burial, but the character, settles the future. One of the oldest questions in the oldest book of the Bible is worth a pondering — "Man dieth, and wasteth away, and *where is he?*"

We who have been lately celebrating our centennial year of existence as a nation scarcely could be expected to appreciate the remoteness of the annals of a land like this. Some of those places have actually been dead ten or twelve times longer than this republic has already lived. A famous papyrus has been found in the Fayûm and deposited at Vienna; most of it has been deciphered; and from this we learn the fact that there was once a town in Lower Egypt, all trace of which seems to have disappeared for the last twelve hundred years or more in utter silence of history. This document, a foot wide and four feet in length, contains a marriage contract; it is written in the Greek language, and is in excellent preservation. The date is not given, but it has upon it other signs for identification so that it is authentically pronounced to belong to the early part of the sixth century. The name of the bridegroom

was *Theon*, and that of the bride *Maria*. She had for her fortune the snug little sum of a hundred gold pieces, and her future husband contracts to furnish her with food and clothing, and every other thing suitable for what he calls his "ordinary legitimate wife." There are witnesses, and then there is added the certificate of a notary-public. All the parties are described as belonging to the town of "Justianopolis." Now there is no mention of any such place on any old list of hamlets, villages, or cities in that region of Africa. It is pathetic always to notice how persistently human life evidences itself as the one immortal thing on this planet. Two hearts love each other, and two people are married; soon the town dies, and geography wipes it off from the map, and history forgets it; and then the wedding certificate comes up to notice, and the town is rehabilitated and looked up. Some of the regions of that land are like tombs in continental cemeteries; the graves of the buried cities lie over each other two or three deep, as the excavations go down and reveal the different dynasties.

It is no place to see Egypt in the cities alone. The entering in of the French and English customs is slowly but certainly making all the ancient habits pass away. The process has thus far, however, only reached confusion. A brook, let suddenly into a stagnant pool, will only roil it for a while; by and by it will cleanse it of the creatures in the slime, and the water will become crystal.

Out in the country one meets Egypt face to face. The regions through which one passes to-day are just as singular as the people. No fences can be seen anywhere. Yet the fields through what is called the Delta of the Nile are singularly fruitful, and are under highest cultivation. Windmills stand awkwardly out upon the hillocks of sand; the well-sweeps are frequent, and groan upon their unoiled swings; canals are cut in every direction, banked up for channels of water; in many places the soil is parched, caked, dried hard as clay, and cracked into deep seams by the heat of the sun; great lumbering, creaking wheels, turned by donkeys, and sometimes by cows, all blindfolded as they walk heavily around in the circle, lift buckets of water high up in the air, and wail dismally as they tip the contents over into a trough; aqueducts, leaking most unthriftily, conduct the scant streams far away upon the distant gardens; sycamores and palms are scatteringly gathered into little sparse tufts here and there across the flat landscape; while the long, white, dusty, hot roads are sprinkled with lonely travelers; big men made to look bigger by their baggy, high-colored clothes, mounted most preposterously on insignificant donkeys, like Maltese cats on rats domesticated, their ungainly feet hanging unstirruped so that their red and yellow slippers almost touch the ground; men and women are working in the shade, or lolling by the scarce fountains, gazing stupidly up at the flying train, as if glad of any

event which contained promise of a sensation and yet too tame, after all, to rise and partake of it — all this with its oddity and confusion is old Egypt to-day.

What seems strangest of all is the absence of houses. Villages of dreadful filth, meanness, squalor indescribable, meet your eye now and then; but miles often intervene between them. Crops of all kinds of grain are growing, and you occasionally discover what you suppose are the tillers of the soil, squat like the letter N, their knees drawn up to touch the chin, precisely as if their bodies were hinged only at two points, and would fold up in the shape of what printers call "condensed" type. But there seems to be a mysterious absence of laborers. Near the wretched villages you see people; but an indefinite sense of loneliness appears to rest upon all these extensive sweeps of territory. A feeble patch of corn, a palm of exquisite proportions, a close clump of olive-trees, may attract your notice; but you will mark no husbandmen near. Herein again you find a Scriptural illustration, and are reminded of the opening of the parable, "Behold, a sower *went forth* to sow."

The explanation we received of this seemed quite satisfactory. The inhabitants are crowded together for mutual defense. They rarely linger in the neighborhoods they cultivate. The Arabs are their hereditary foes. Distance from them is their only safety. Now that the country is opened

up, there is hardly a shadow of danger; but old habits are never broken up there. So they do their tasks in all expedition (for an oriental), and then hurry away to their homes.

Now this is what God has said concerning Egypt: "It shall be the basest of kingdoms, neither shall it exalt itself any more among the nations. The pride of her power shall come down. And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate; and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted. I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked. I will make the land waste, and all that is therein by the hand of strangers. And there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt." These are specific, clear denunciations; have any of them been fulfilled? Are any left unfulfilled?

Every one of them has been proved true in each particular. This miserable strip of soil, lying out there on the margin of the desert, must always be to the world of an importance entirely incommensurate with its worth. Inconvenient of access, unhealthy in climate, dangerous to traverse, ineffably vexatious with its beggary and extortion, it yet attracts and rivets the attention of the successive ages. Divine purpose seems to preserve it in its ruin to witness to its ruin. Ground to the dust, Egypt has no prospect, not even a gleam of promise of redemption. England and France now hold it down under Turkish sway, only that eventually they may divide it between them.

Is it "desolate"? Did inspiration catch the precise word in that utterance of prediction? Alas, the very type of desolation could nowhere be found as well as it can in this enslaved land!

Now the glory is all departed, and the scenes which Abram visited, which Moses saw, and which Joseph moved among as a prince in power, are vanished into indescribable desolation. Of the continent at large, Egypt, once the most splendid portion, now actually seems by contrast to lie in lowest degradation.

It is admitted that the best test of civilization or of barbarism in this age of the world is found in the condition of the female sex. And in Africa women are the simple burden-bearers of the men. Day by day each maiden carries upon her head the huge pile of brushwood she has painfully gathered for her scant fuel, as she makes ready the meager cake for her master. All that toil can attain, all that thrift can save, goes to the inevitable publican who comes grinding for taxes. Beaten, impoverished, worn, and weary, Egypt is the basest of kingdoms, as prophecy predicted. Men are too selfish to be decent, and quite too brutal to be gallant. So women are hiding agony, as well as shame, behind veils.

It is interesting to know, as one of the most significant of illustrations, that some years ago the attempt was made by a famous musician to represent in an orchestral composition what he intended to call "Souvenirs of Egypt." Into the

music he introduced the many characteristic sounds he heard while on a visit to that country. But so unutterably sad and wild were the strains that the piece was rejected. One lonely and unchanging creak was evermore present in the windings of the harmony — the sound of the terrible instrument for the lifting of the water, as the wheel and bucket turned on the unoiled axle. Any one would notice that now. If you listen out in the fields, where the men would be likely to be the most jocund and where the women would feel freest, you at times might hear the fellaheen singing. But alas for the tunes they produce! The best melody they possess is one called "The Song of the Harvest." But even this is a plaintive strain, the intervals of which are all minor. You cannot catch the tones easily, so as to know it. Rowing, digging, planting, the laborers will keep droning and crooning with each other; but the sound is only like that of men wailing over pain. So the whole land weeps and groans under the oppression of man and the reprobation of God.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will break his arms, the strong, and that which was broken; and I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand. And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries. Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and lo, it shall not be

bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it, to make it strong to hold the sword. And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundation shall be broken down."

These were the predictions which came to Ezekiel from heaven, in the days of the last of the Pharaohs. He was bidden to "howl" when he uttered them: "Woe worth the day!" They howl of themselves; they have all been fulfilled; and the land howls to-day under the weight of them from Syene to Zoan. We are wont to imagine that what is oriental must necessarily be bright and happy-hearted. We picture the home of these strange foreigners we meet in the streets as sunny and glad; for they wear garments of silk and slippers embroidered with gold; they ring as they walk as if they had bells on their ankles; they dance on the rich carpets they carry for sale; what mirthful days they must have in that beautiful region where the good Caliph ruled in the Arabian Nights.

Alas! there is anything but glee in Egypt. If there is pleasure at night in Cairo or gayety in the daytime, it is enjoyed by the opulent classes and tourists, and is crushed out of the poor. It is ever sad and lonesome in the villages. The inhabitants never seem to laugh or sing. Boys are not antic; girls look frightened till the day comes when they lose their shame; men and women appear tired and hopeless.

But is it true that there is no national fame or feeling in that country? Is it exact to say that "no prince" has sat on the throne of Egypt since Ezekiel's prophecy was fulfilled? To such questions it is sufficient to answer, that, from Alexandria to the Cataracts, and from the Red Sea to the Libyan Desert, Egypt has been a battle-ground soaked with blood for a thousand years. It has always been torn to pieces by outside people; the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Mohammedans, the French, the English, the Turks: each in turn, and some one of such always, has held that country in bondage of hateful oppression.

Some years ago, when I happened to be in Constantinople, I stood looking out on the Bosphorus at the fine show of shipping there was in the harbor One of our mission friends called our attention to two or three very costly and beautiful iron-clad war-steamers that lay at anchor in the stream. They seemed quite new, and he told us a story about them. The Egyptian Khedive was suspected of some small notion of making a strike for national freedom, but nobody interfered, although a rumor reached Constantinople that he was building some serious vessels with dangerous armaments. By and by, when the expensive monsters were just getting finished, the Khedive received a most polite missive from the Sultan, saying in effect that he had heard of the loyal purpose of his faithful people in Egypt to help him in his need of war-ships, and it had given him exceeding

pleasure; the time was most propitious, for it so happened that he was at this moment going to start an expedition to the far East; would the Khedive pardon him for the suggestion of an increase in hastening preparation, if it would not give him inconvenience? Of course, the quick thing to be done was to make the best of a discovery so fatal, and send the iron-clads as a gift of the most truly loyal and obsequious attachment to the Sublime Porte. So, just then the vessels had come in, and all the city was out in admiration. That is the way in which Egypt is treated; whoever makes, she always loses.

The picture is very melancholy; yet I have nothing with which to render even the close of the lecture more cheerful. Two peculiarities there are, one a religious custom, and the other a natural phenomenon, which have very much to do with the importance of these late discoveries of mummies. The ancient Egyptians believed that the soul of a human being was wont to return sometimes to the form it used to inhabit. They therefore embalmed each body instantly after death, with the view of preserving it absolutely through the eternity of years. There have been found sculptured upon the walls of temples certain very significant representations of their ideas on the subject. A winged insect, with a human head, is just flitting down toward the coffin-lid, underneath which is the shrouded form preserved in its spices; outside, upon the

case, is painted the countenance in bold outlines, seeming just glad to give a welcome with its wide-open eyes, as it used to give.

The other peculiarity of Egypt is found in its almost positively rainless climate. There might be said to be no showers ever in Egypt. The river Nile gives all the moisture the fields have, with its annual inundation, but this covers only the plains; the hillsides are dry always. Hence it results that, when the bodies of the dead were properly embalmed, and then deposited in one of these dry receptacles of the rocks beneath the unchanging sands, they might be considered well-nigh imperishable. It need give no surprise whatsoever to us that the bodies of veritable men and women, who lived four thousand years ago, are still on the earth, unchanged in lineament and feature. Not unlikely, there are countless thousands of those who saw Joseph on his throne in Egypt now lying undisturbed in their sycamore coffins, their hands on their breasts, their eyes closed, their funeral garlands still twined.

So at last this old, dreamy, dreary land, which is first and even foremost in the inspired history, comes forth into conspicuousness because of its deadness. We have lived through the ages until now, in this year of our Lord, there is offered before the world a new species of logical argument, a fresh kind of Evidences of Christianity.

II

THE GREAT DISCOVERY IN 1881.

For lo, they are gone because of destruction: Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them.— Hosea ix. 6.

A HUNDRED years ago one of the best read of historians expressed his wonder that the place where old Memphis stood could not, even to this day, be identified. It is only now, within the limits of a generation or two, that the spot has been found, and little enough there is left to mark it. There used to be palaces and villas which were the wonder of the age in that famous city. They are entirely gone now. Even the foundations of the temples can be traced only by difficult excavation. One beautiful statue remains, broken already, and fallen flat on its face, but still preserving, in attractive expression, the fair countenance of Rameses II., whose name it bears. It was originally more than forty feet high. Half buried in the mud, the head of the sore-eyed orange-vender, who follows the traveler around as he gazes upon it, only reaches up to the level of its thickness. Fair type is this prostrate monument of all the sunken grandeur of the city.

It is easy to understand here, however, the meaning of the ancient prophet, when he says of the unfortunate people whom he denounced, "Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them"; for the most notable memorials of all the splendor once triumphant here are the tombs. The entire bed of stone, which seems to underlie the cemetery, is honeycombed with cavities for sepulture, long ago rifled of their contents for the sake of possible gold ornaments interred with the dead. We know, as we gaze upon these acres of graves, that we are in the grand cemetery of the empire. Tremendous burial-ground is this we are gazing upon! One cannot fail to be impressed with its solemn majesty; he must heed its admonition.

For all those thousands of seasons came funeral processions filing across the sand, and bringing down their burdens to deposit here. Some of the excavations are fifty, sixty, and seventy feet deep. Mausoleums of structure marvelously beautiful are lying shattered and open; one wonders what forgotten monarch there could have been to tenant the hollow chambers. Mortifying end he certainly came to at the last, whoever he was; for the miscreant Ishmaelites have already stolen the mummy, and quite possibly burnt it for fuel. The spices would make the fire pleasantly odorous for these sons of the desert! These myriads of sepulchers of high and low, opened just for plunder — what are they? Mere sockets, into which the lights of

the generations were placed, the infinitesimal magnates of each dying dynasty; and after flaming on for a few years, they lapsed into horrid dimness, and finally smoked themselves away into oblivion. Alas! very much of this world's greatness vanishes into equal nothing, and ends ignobly in equal blank. Only it is another of these Egypts that gathers them up, and another of these vast Memphises that buries them.

It matters little that the strict interpretation of this passage forces us to admit that the offenders threatened by Hosea were Israelites, really foreigners in Africa. Indeed, it rather helps us in taking our impression of this country of the dead, lying along the deserts beside the river Nile. The very naturalness with which the prophet is speaking, when he declares that those who have disobeyed God shall receive banishment for their retribution, and burial in the land of Pharaoh for their doom, is suggestive. He wrote his words seven hundred years after Moses finished the Pentateuch; and for all those centuries Egypt had inconspicuously been growing to be the mausoleum of the continent, while Memphis, its chief city, had become the graveyard of the race.

It is, however, of another cemetery we are to speak on this occasion; of Thebes, still farther in the interior, away up the Nile, familiar to a large number of you through the photographs of edifices and ruins, the most beautiful in all that desolate country. We shall be able to make a clearer

exhibition of our specific theme to-night if we begin with a story of the explorations which within a few years have set the entire world to wondering at the strange and mighty providences of God.

Somewhere about 1870, at the time of our second visit to Egypt, a fresh appointment had been made in the administration of the great Museum in Bûlak, the port, if we may so call it, of Cairo; that is, the hamlet nearest Cairo, on the borders of the Nile, where the city finds its approach to the water-course, leading down its commerce and travel to the Mediterranean Sea. This new man, by name Professor Maspero, had for a long time been arrested by the fact that relics, far more valuable and important than anything which had for ages appeared among the curiosities of this mysterious land, had from time to time been strangely put on sale in different places along the river. For one thing, there arrived scarabs of extraordinary rarity, bearing marks of monarchs which belonged to ancient dynasties that had almost no history in the knowledge of scholars. Scarabs are small stone and metal imitations of the beetle, shaped like that peculiar insect, and originally worn like the amulets or seal-rings of noble and royal personages. These used to exhibit certain hieroglyphic etchings on their surface, cartouches as it was customary to call them, each being the personal designation of the monarch to whom they belonged. Thus it became evident that some fresh

burial-place had been opened, for with them were brought to light certain gold ornaments, such as were often found in graves of sovereigns.

Before long, Professor Maspero was presented with a photograph of a portion of a burial-service. Upon examination he declared this to be a fragment of the ritual used at the funeral of Pinotem I. It had been bought by an English traveler from one of the natives near Luxor.

Upon this, the enterprising director of the institution, excited and eager with the enthusiasm of discovery close at hand, lost no time in proceeding to Upper Egypt on an official errand of exploration. He soon arrived at Thebes, and began quietly to work in the neighborhood.

What attracted his notice more than anything else was the extraordinary number of scarabs flooding the market, especially those bearing the cartouches of Thotmes III. and Rameses II., the two persons in ancient Egyptian history who stood highest as conquering heroes and as monarchs of mark. These were evidently not fabricated, as are a large majority of the objects offered to tourists in the Orient; they had an undoubted authenticity which rendered them all the more remarkable. A rumor was in the air, also, that travelers visiting Luxor, if they were found to be rich and liberal, and would be easy as to asking awkwardly constructed questions concerning the property they purchased, might be successful in obtaining mummies to their hearts' content. It

has been publicly stated since that there was a plain offer made to an American gentleman then in Egypt that, for a proper consideration, the actually labeled and authenticated body of the great Rameses himself could quietly be furnished to him for exportation across the two seas.

These things seem to have aroused Mons. Maspero to make a satisfactory and thorough investigation of this mystery. Almost all of the writers who attempt to describe this kind of detective process appear to have been impressed with the difficulty of the task and the ingenuity with which it was finally accomplished. It meant nothing less, so one says, than "getting the truth out of the Arabs, a race with whom lying is a natural gift, brought to its highest perfection by constant exercise. Moreover, the particular Arab, a certain Abd-er-Rasoul, to whom the sale of the antiquities in question could be clearly traced, and who possessed beyond a doubt the secret of the hiding-place, sheltered himself behind the ægis of the venerable Mustafa Aga, vice-consul of England and Belgium at Luxor. It was impossible for Mons. Maspero to arrest Mustafa Aga, shielded as he was by diplomatic immunity."

Perfectly confident, however, that he had laid his finger upon the exact man, he at once ordered the apprehension of Abd-er-Rasoul, and had him confined in the district prison at Keneh. Two of this man's relatives with whom he was living were reputed to be his brothers; it grew quite clear

before long, from his jealousy, if from nothing else, that they were his partners in the profitable crime of body-snatching. For two months the unfortunate prisoner maintained an obstinate silence about the entire story, and meantime the brothers, keeping their secret haunts among the tombs, had all the trade to themselves, but did poorly in the matter of dividing the profits. This the virtue of the senior partner could not patiently abide, and he betrayed the whole plot.

After a time, Abd-er-Rasoul was set at liberty provisionally; and the secret might still have been kept, had not discord arisen in his own family. He had four brothers who shared with him in this profitable mystery; and a bitter difference of opinion arising among them, the eldest went to the Mudir of Keneh and told him that he knew of the hiding-place in question; that it contained about forty mummies, bearing emblems like those seen on the coffins of the Pharaohs. The news was at once carried to the Khedive. Mons. Maspero had just left Egypt for Europe; but Herr Emil Brugsch, a relative of the historian of Egypt, and subconservator of the Museum of Bûlak, at Cairo, was dispatched to Thebes, where he found the hiding-place in question at Deir-el-Bahari, in which were secreted some thirty-six mummies of kings, queens, princes, and high-priests.

There is nothing in history that parallels the dramatic enthusiasm of such a discovery as this. The wonderful news was sent by telegraph to

England and France, and everywhere awoke the curiosity of the world. The silence of thirty centuries was broken. A new chapter had been written in the history of poor, desolate Egypt. Some doubted, and some laughed; it was too astounding to be true. Within a fortnight of excited days there were a score of narratives full of particulars, and crowded with confirmations. Soon the official reports of Herr Brugsch and Professor Maspero were received in Europe; these told the details, and described the processes. And it is only necessary now to rehearse what the public prints have rendered familiar to scholars already.

These events of which we have been speaking occurred in the summer of 1881. In just these there was enough to arouse the interest of the whole world. But the details of the story increased the interest, and with each step of the advance the vast importance of it was seen.

The temple of Deir-el-Bahari stands in the middle of a natural amphitheater of cliffs, which is only one of a number of similar amphitheaters into which the limestone mountains of the tombs are broken up. In the wall of rock separating this basin from the one next to it, some ancient Egyptian engineer had constructed the hiding-place whose secret had been kept for nearly three thousand years. A shaft six and a half feet square, and about thirty-seven feet deep, had been sunk in the solid rock; at the bottom of this shaft a long passage turned off toward the west, then

abruptly toward the north, ending at last in a kind of oblong chamber, twenty-three feet long by thirteen feet in breadth. This was the mortuary chamber where the greater number of the mummies were found last year, and which are now deposited in the Bûlak Museum.

As soon as Herr Emil Brugsch had arrived at the bottom of the shaft, and at the very entrance of the long passage, he came in sight of a yellow and white coffin; soon another, of the seventeenth dynasty; then more and more; while the ground was so littered with vases, funeral urns, statuettes, and other Egyptian funeral gear, that Herr Brugsch, who had to advance in many places by crawling, scarcely knew where to place his hands and feet. What words can picture the feelings of the explorer as, glancing rapidly by the dim light of a candle from one coffin to another, he read on them the well-known cartouches of the greatest kings of Egyptian history! "I ask myself now," says Mons. Maspero, "if I am not dreaming when I see and touch the bodies of so many great personages, of whom I never expected to know more than the names."

Brugsch, however, did not waste much time in sentimental reflections. Two hours sufficed for the first inspection, and then the work of removal began. What that work was like under a July sun in Egypt can be imagined by those who know what the Egyptian sun can do in March, when the thermometer often stands at ninety degrees in the

shade. It took forty-eight hours to remove all the objects from the tomb; and many of the mummy-cases, which could with difficulty be lifted by twelve or sixteen men, took seven or eight hours to be carried from the cliff to the banks of the Nile where they had to be ferried across to join the Museum steamer at Luxor. What a changed state of things for Rameses the Great! Who that saw him embarked in his stately funeral barge, and carried to his painted tomb in the rocks of Bab-el-Molûk, followed by the great pageant of priests and singers and mourners, would ever have dreamed that he would be taken thence, and sent pell-mell with a shipload of other royal carcasses, in a miserable Arab boat, to be finally laid out in the Bûlak Museum, for the gaze of the tourist! As the Museum steamer, with its freight of dead kings, steamed down the river toward Cairo, it was followed for some distance along the shore by a crowd of natives, the women with disheveled hair, shrieking and howling, and the men shooting off guns, as they do at funerals.

And now after this the Egypt Exploration Society took up vigorous excavations, and during that winter kept bringing to light more of the revelations which the tombs were ready to make all along the banks of the Upper Nile. With these came other objects that told of the ordinary life of those ancient peoples, strangers and home-dwellers, often curiously mingled together; and history began to increase apace.

The mummies were carefully identified, and these august personages began to appear like real beings brought up afresh before the tribunal of human judgment as to their characters and acts. Some of that great group of kings were unrolled; so years passed along, for scientific investigation moves with care and wise delay of consideration.

In the summer of this last year, 1886, the mummy of Seti I., and that of his extraordinary son, Rameses II., with that of Rameses III., and that of Thotmes III., the obelisk-maker, were divested of the resinous shrouds they were buried in, and the inscriptions were read with skilled knowledge of the characters the priests had used in the funeral rites and liturgies. So now there is visible in the Museum at Bûlak a long row of mummies, whose very names fill our whole imagination with amazement: there is the king who knew Joseph; there is the father of Pharaoh's daughter, and the founder of the dynasty that dwelt in Zoan. They are dead as stones; but each "being dead yet speaketh," as plainly as did Abel.

Permit me these two reflections, as we end the lecture to-night. First, let us try to realize what is opened upon the Bible-loving race of men the world over. How fantastic is the conception, yet it may be a literal fact, that we can look upon the lips that once said to Jacob the words, "How old art thou?" Nay, we can look upon the hollow eyes where once flashed the meanness with which another Pharaoh said: "Every son that is born

ye shall cast into the river!" How real such revelations make these Pharaohs to become! What confirmations of Scripture are coming now close at hand! Over those silent graves a hundred generations of men have walked unconscious how near they were to valuable discovery. Tourists have gossiped among the ruins of the temples at Luxor with no suspicion that the still forms of a hundred sovereign rulers of lost ages were slumbering amid their spices, just underneath the sands they trod upon. Who shall say what God has yet in store for historic reserves of argument wherewith to silence the cavils of small infidels, who carp in their vanity at the absence of books? Shall the world ever look upon the face of Abraham and Jacob, rescued from those mosque guardians in Machpelah? Shall we find Joseph's bones in the opened tomb at Shechem? And is David going to appear from Mount Zion?

Then the other thought is this: If the Bible is proved true, and the Law of Moses is confirmed, at the same moment as the Gospel of Jesus is established, where in that great blaze of light will the wicked deeds of men appear? Shall the Son of Mary, who was the Son of God in the flesh, ever really see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied in the redemption of saints? Is Christ coming, as he said he would, in the clouds of heaven? And then will the dead arise, and go to one assembly for judgment on the plains of eternity? Will the breath return into the nostril of this dead

Pharaoh, so that he shall stand up for a review of his life in the burning light of the great white throne? Ah, where will you and I be in that day of days, and what shall we answer?

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

III

MUMMIES AS EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

Pharaoh, king of Egypt, is but a noise; he hath passed the time appointed.—Jeremiah xlvi. 17.

IN the New Revision this clause reads somewhat differently, with a subtle but very forcible suggestion of a shift in the responsibility of the sin implied: "Pharaoh, king of Egypt, is but a noise; he hath let the appointed time pass by." That is to say: Pharaoh is of no account now; he has had his chance and lost it; he has outlived his influence; his day is over; he is not a sovereign any longer; he is only a noise. Or, as Matthew Henry paraphrases it: "Pharaoh can hector and talk big; but that is all; all his promises vanish into smoke." The whole verse is a plain description of what the Egyptian kings had come to as late down in the history as the age in which Jeremiah wrote his prophecy.

It is likely that some Scripture readers will grow confused over the recurrence of this name so often, and at such widely extended periods, through the Old Testament and the New. It needs to be borne

always in mind that *Pharaoh* was not a man's name, but the name of an office. It was like the word *Czar* among the Russians, like *Cæsar* among the Romans; it was the title of the king in all the dynasties. Scholars tell us that it is one of remote antiquity; originally it was *Per-ao*, or "the Great House"; this would be to the Hebrews *Pharaoh*. It is like the term "Sublime Porte" applied to Turkey. Hence, it is not inappropriate for us to use this fragment of Jeremiah's book in speaking of the entire line of Pharaohs running back for a thousand years before his time; they are all naught but a noise out in the air.

In trying to interest you in a subject so dry as mummies, I am at a loss how to proceed intelligently, unless we take a glance over a few of the general features of Egyptian history, as far as it has become a settled record. Three great periods are accepted as the most convenient divisions of time: there was the Ancient Empire, then the reign of the Shepherd Kings, and after that the later monarchy whose capital in Thebes was the center of a despotism which harassed the entire world.

We who are students of the Bible have been accustomed to group all we know of these three periods around the more familiar and honored names of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses. There seems so close a continuity between these great leaders that we are apt to forget how vast a flood of years glided away as the swift chapters of

the Pentateuch ran along. That Pharaoh who troubled Abram so vexatiously about his beautiful wife lived and died two hundred years before that Pharaoh arose whose dreams gave Joseph such difficult problems to solve with his interpretation; and it was two hundred years more before that Pharaoh arose whose oppressions in the brickyards forced the Hebrew slaves into rebellion. But four or five hundred years hardly seem worth counting, when we are compelled to say that at least twelve dynasties — not single monarchs, but dynasties, whole lines of hereditary kings — reigned in Memphis previous to the day when Abram first went down into Egyptian worry with Sarah. After all these had passed away, there came a direct overthrow of the government, and an establishment of a mysterious sway called that of the *Hyksos*, or the Shepherd Kings, of which no one knows anything worth the telling, except the fact that the last of the line is believed by some scholars to have been the patron of Joseph in those early years when the famine raged, and the persecuted son of Jacob came to the headship of the nation in the midst of which he providentially found a shelter when sold as a slave by his brothers. Later Pharaohs, like that one mentioned in the verse of Jeremiah and in subsequent chapters of the Old Testament, are to be understood as belonging to the kingdom which had its capital for a while at Memphis, but in its dominant periods changed, for some unexplained

reason, its seat of government to a city farther up the Nile. So these men lived and died unhistorically, reigned and were buried in their regal state at Thebes, where the splendid ruins of Karnak and Luxor have long been the admiration of the tourist and the wonder of the world. A national uprising at last wrested the scepter from the hands of the marauders, and kindled the hearts of the people with something almost like patriotism, so that the monarchy under Thotmes and Rameses reached its highest glory.

It is high time that some details should be given you concerning what was actually found in this strange vault at Deir-el-Bahari. Mere lists of mummies and dull catalogues of objects would only fatigue our patience. Let us select a few of the most prominent discoveries. The reports sent forth by official sanction are singularly full, and really read like so many romances. The facts come directly from them, however, and there is left no longer any doubt of their authenticity.

It may be noted here that the mummies found in this inclosure were as a rule inclosed in a coffin or outer case made of wood, or of layers of linen glued and hardened together, and beautifully decorated with religious emblems and hieroglyphs. In some instances, one mummy was found to have two, in others, three of those cases. The case is generally shaped like the mummy within it, the upper lid being so formed as to represent a kind of effigy of the deceased, painted

in gold and colors. The dead body forming the mummy is occasionally wrapped in a shroud, held together by a series of bandages; but more generally the mummy is wrapped in bandages only. These bandages are frequently covered with written characters. So thoroughly was the process of embalming mastered by these ancient dwellers on the Nile, that some of the bodies show but few marks of decay. A remarkable instance is that of Pinotem II., whose head and face have been photographed, and whose features seem almost as recognizable now as when he was laid in his rocky tomb three thousand years ago.

The oldest of the relics discovered in this hiding-place was the mummy and coffin of Sekenen-ra, an early Theban king of the seventeenth dynasty, which flourished about three thousand six hundred years ago. He was one of those who struggled to overthrow the dominion of the Shepherd Kings. The founder of the Theban monarchy, Ahmes I., the conqueror of the Shepherd Kings, is also among the number. And second only in interest to the bodies of the great military heroes, Thotmes III. and Rameses II., is that of Seti I., father of Rameses, the discovery of whose tomb forms such an exciting story in Belzoni's Travels, and whose splendid alabaster sarcophagus is now to be seen in the Soane Museum, London.

The first group, being the oldest, is naturally the worst as regards its state of preservation; and

there are few of the coffins which do not show marks of having been restored, or even renewed in ancient times. There are also two curious instances of false mummies, bundles of sticks or rags done up with such art that if the Arabs, in search of jewelry or scarabs, had not torn open the bandages of the embalmer, the fraud would never have been discovered.

Among the more interesting objects found in the various cases, a few might perhaps be mentioned here. At least four valuable papyri of various magnitudes are enumerated. One of these, called by the designation of *Queen Ra-ma-ka*, is illuminated exquisitely in colors of emerald and scarlet. It measures sixteen inches wide, and when unrolled will probably be found to measure a hundred and forty or fifty feet in length. Then there was discovered a magnificent tent or royal canopy for the shade, made of leather of different hues, and bearing the cartouch of King Pinotem I., with the kingly vultures and stars in green, yellow, and red. Counting them together, fifteen enormous wigs were in the depository; these were designed for use upon occasions of ceremony somewhere in this world or the next. These head-dresses are about two feet high, and are constructed out of curled hair or wool falling down in braids behind one's back. Of funereal statuettes, it is reckoned in the list that there were at least three thousand seven hundred. These are of porcelain, and each bears a cartouch and an

inscription. Then there follows in the official report the catalogue of nearly two thousand other objects, miscellaneous, such as drinking-cups, baskets, vases, lamps, urns, chairs, dried fruits, boxes, all of these well kept. It would seem as if the friends of the deceased had intended to secure the mummies from all anxieties as to the comforts of the future.

Next to this venerable group of royal personages comes a second, in which are found the coffins and other funereal objects of later dynasties. Kings, queens, and princesses, young and old, are buried apparently with equal honor and respect in the common tomb. It is probable that nowhere else in the East would such a description be true. Domestic affection was extremely strong among the ancient Egyptians, the family bond being a sacred and elevating thing, and women taking a position which is unknown in other oriental states. The presence of so many queens and princesses in this hiding-place shows that their corpses received as much reverence and care as those of their royal husbands and fathers. Some of these resting-places look like family vaults in modern periods of history, rather than like heathen receptacles of hideous mummies.

Our single purpose in this lecture is to show, if we can, what a discovery of mummies like this has in it that is valuable as an additional chapter in the Evidences of Christianity. Here have we found in the nineteenth century a fresh and large

mausoleum of dead Egyptians — what of it? What has this to do with the proclamation that all men on earth are sinners, and must come to the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved?

For one thing, we answer, these mummies are solemn and indisputable facts. It so happens that the chief attack made upon the Christian religion at the present day is leveled at the authenticity of that part of the sacred Book called the Pentateuch, and especially at the historic details of Genesis, Exodus, and Deuteronomy. The writings of one author are deliberately singled out, and so clearly brought into a public discussion as to be recognized by his name. Volumes and tracts are issued, entitled "Moses Demolished" and "Moses Defied by History"; and hitherto the church of the living God has had to labor under a serious embarrassment. The annals of that land where the beginnings had been located have been so scant that it was difficult to keep our hold against the repeated derision of ribald skeptics, declaring we had the fables of a credulous faith instead of the arguments of an intelligent scholarship. There was the smallest sort of a history of Egypt openly accepted. And when men stood up to raise a laugh by crying out in the very words of our text to-night, "Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise: he hath passed the time appointed," it was hard to know what to say.

Now just at this juncture a score of Pharaohs are discovered and brought before our eyes. We

do not have to talk about them as if they were Mars and Saturn and Jupiter and Vulcan; their story was not a poet's myth; they were real beings, and have been waiting some thousands of years in the dry sand and rock of their own land for our service.

Put with this a second thought: these mummied men and women have been lying there, with their children beside them in the same silence, with their history wrapped around them written on their winding-sheets and coffins. Thus dates are fixed, and events are established, and an explanation furnished of a hundred mysteries in a breath. The declarations of the much-maligned Moses, who wrote in the simplicity of candid narration as an exact historian, are confirmed at every point. An illustration meets us here just at hand. These graves have been opening their stores of information for years all along up the Nile. From one comes a papyrus, from another comes a brick, from a third comes an inscription on a stone. These are like the pieces of a dissected map in the hands of a child; they need only to be put together in order to be intelligible, and then each fragment of knowledge fastens and confirms the next. For example, it comes out in one instance that Menephtah, a Pharaoh whose body has not yet been found, but whose memorials in several forms exist so that we know he was the king who defied the Lord's power in the final Exodus, and was punished with the ten plagues — the fact comes out that he was seriously

troubled in the last years of his reign by a pretender to the throne. Why should there be a "pretender" in any case, if there was a legitimate heir, the first-born son of the monarch? It almost assumes that there was no such person, to say that a pretender set up a claim, and, indeed, succeeded in obtaining the golden scepter and holding it for five years. Put with this the information supplied by a monument preserved in the Berlin Museum; this tells that Menephtah lost a son by a very melancholy and sudden death. Neither this nor that gives the circumstances, but the fact is noted, and the story is silent. That his successor was dead had to be stated because of the titles in the reigning line; but that he died in the terrible plague of the Exodus was perhaps too much for the Egyptian vanity. Here the narrative of the inspired book is needed to supplement a group of suggestive facts, and connect them so that they can be understood. It was not to be expected that there would be any mention made of the ten plagues by which the infuriated monarch was constrained into submission to Jehovah; the details were too mortifying to be related. Think of the humiliation of Pharaoh in having to admit that princes of the blood, and maid-servants in the houses, prisoners in jails, and laborers in the field, even beasts in their stalls, must share the same awful stroke of Jehovah's wrath; the king must mourn in his grief over his eldest boy as a bereaved cow was mourning over her dead calf! There would be one com-

mon wail of broken hearts through Egypt. Hence, national haughtiness would hush up such things. But Moses gives them:

"And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt: for there was not a house where there was not one dead."

These particulars of wonderful corroboration cannot be painstakingly brought forward in a brief lecture like this. They must be quietly waited for, and will soon appear, in the commentaries on the Holy Scriptures. It is enough for us to say now, that in these coffins, as in most other instances, were found papyri of the greatest value. Now, a papyrus is a paper: the name of paper comes from papyrus, which is an old name for a reed plant formerly growing profusely beside the oriental rivers. It has a smooth, triangular stem, sometimes more than fifteen to twenty feet long, bearing flat, grassy leaves springing from an offshoot near the ground. Let me mention in passing that, when we had our tour in Egypt the second time, we were quite anxious to procure an authentic specimen of branch or leaf of this famous plant as a memento of our visit among the rest. We were told that nothing of the kind in all Egypt

was now to be found: and then we recalled Isaiah's prophecy: "And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts. And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defense shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither. The paper-reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks shall wither, be driven away, and be no more."

Such a fulfillment of inspired prediction is of itself noteworthy in collating evidences, for this reed-plant used to be among the characteristic vegetation which was most profuse along the Nile banks. It was the custom in ancient times to fashion from its inner bark sheets, long, thin, narrow, resembling strips cut from a palm-leaf fan in texture and appearance, upon which letters might be written in ink, mingled with figures and characters — precisely as if a historian had used pen and paper. One of these, found in 1856, is made of consecutive or attached portions until it reaches the magnificent length of one hundred and thirty-three feet. Even in our own country these strange volumes, so fragile and yet so incorruptible, are beginning to be gathered. A notice has been sent to me this very week of the public assembling of the scholars in New Brunswick to receive with fitting honors a fine papyrus, forty-two feet long,

to be cherished hereafter as one of the real treasures of our neighboring State. This contains the mysterious chapters of the famous "Book of the Dead." It has just been unrolled at the Sage Library in that city: the gift was presented by Rev. Dr. Lansing, a missionary in Egypt, and is now thirty centuries old.

Hence it cannot fail to be seen that, with all these appliances, vast additions to the annals and biographies of Egyptian times and men have been secured. These aid in settling questions about Moses; Moses was but the forerunner of the Redeemer; the law was a schoolmaster only to lead men to Christ: thus the connection is easily established.

Let us notice, in the third place, the bearing these discoveries will have in the domain of science. Much information comes up from an unexplored chamber that was filled with history four thousand years ago. There will be elements of new discussion in ethnology introduced, now that the dates of these dynasties are fixed. Have the forms, colors, race-signs of human beings changed since then? There will be an uneasy surrender of some of the dangerous features of the modern theories of evolution on the part of its radical advocates, and men are in all likelihood coming closer to the fact about God's making the world.

Then, too, in the matter of botany there will be some curious disclosures. Many of these mummies are still encircled with the garlands which were

placed in their coffins, and these strange old plants, even after three thousand years of airless dryness and darkness have passed over them, still retain their blue, red, and yellow colors, so as to be recognized and distinguished. Among them are larkspurs and mimosas in tasteful combination of arrangement; and there are specimens of a reddish Abyssinian annual, not now to be found anywhere in Egypt. One of the most interesting surprises of this find was that of the body of an insignificant wasp. It was imprisoned in the sarcophagus of one of the most famous of all the monarchs of antiquity, having entered just previous to the closing of the coffin, no doubt attracted by the flowers; and with no foes to pity it, no friends to embalm it, that poor insect was soon suffocated alongside of a king, and left to be preserved to a far-away generation as the only example of a mummied thing with wings.

Thus we see how perfectly a true science establishes itself upon the same basis as a true revelation, for one God is the author of both. All these incidental disclosures will be shown to be valuable, as soon as the great scholars are given their chance to classify and discriminate objects of so strange an interest. Professor Proctor asserts, in a recent publication, that "types of animals, man included, as well as plants, have changed little during the long period, five thousand four hundred years at least, which has elapsed since the time of the first dynasties in

Egypt." Here, now, we have new reënforcements of the old arguments. The Bible has everything to hope for, and nothing to fear, in the ultimate truths of science, the moment they are wisely settled.

Hence, finally, we are ready to accept another thought: the life of the Old Testament is now beginning to be reproduced from under that land upon the surface of which it was wrought out. It will soon offer itself to our imaginations as real as that of the New Testament, and a fresh intelligence will pass over the ancient pages of Moses' books as we read them. The characters will show themselves really human beings, much like ourselves, thoroughly resembling us in passions, vices, virtues, belonging to the same race of God's creatures. They ate, drank, slept, and waked; they married, they were given in marriage, they wept, they laughed, they loved, they hated, they suffered, sickened, and had at last to die. In those mummy-cases were found dolls and balls, with old worn playthings of the little children by whose side they were interred. One of the ancient queens has with her the embalmed body of a pet gazelle from which she could not bear to be snatched. Soldiers in those swathing-clothes yet hold their weapons, painters keep their palettes in aromatic fingers which have lost their cunning. Mallets and planes have been from time to time found buried with masons, adzes and chisels with carpenters. There was one mummy discovered

with a sealed letter in his possession: Timoxenes, a Greek, wrote to Moschius, requesting the good offices within his power, but the young man never presented his missive of introduction. He died before he reached his patron, and the packet remained unread and unopened, as the slow ages sped on.

Things seem to have grown more luxurious as times advanced; that mummy which Monsieur Maspero conjectures is the last of those interred in the sepulcher, namely, that of the Princess Isi-em-Kheb, was surrounded by a large number of such ornaments, utensils, and general comforts as rich people were accustomed to have with their corpses when the end came. There were placed with this royal body boxes of statuettes, vases for libations, goblets of blue or enameled glass, panniers full of immense curled wigs, a hamper of provisions for her funeral repast, in which were legs of gazelle, trussed geese, calves' head, raisins, dom-palm fruits and dates. Then there was buried with her the canopy, under which her body had rested sheltered from the sun as it crossed the Nile over from Thebes; this was curiously fashioned out of some thousands of pieces of leather of various brilliant colors worked together.

It is in this way that we are introduced suddenly into the whole life of the generation to which these people belonged whose mummies we see. Thus we are enabled more perfectly to understand allusions to any form or custom in the social

etiquette of that day; thus small palace intrigues come to light; thus petty peculiarities and tastes of an unamiable monarch are disclosed; thus by one degree and another the opened tombs tell us how the Egyptian people lived forty centuries ago.

And also how they died, and suffered, and mourned: for there has been added one small touch of pathos in this story, which makes even a tally of mummies interesting. On the official catalogue an entry numbered in order gives as a label this: "A double sarcophagus containing the mummies of two queens, named Makara and Maut-em-Hat." It would be quite inexplicable that two queens should die at the same moment, that a common coffin should receive them, that a common honor should designate them. But there is inclosed a funeral papyrus that tells the exact facts. That small queen, only sixteen inches long, was the infant daughter of the other at whose head she lies. The mother died as that little babe saw the light, and the child died too. But Queen Maut-em-Hat was endowed with her regal rights; they titled her precisely as if she had lived, grown up, and done her part in the busy world. She has everything her parent had; they call her "Royal Daughter, Royal Wife, Royal Mother," though she just looked into life, and then vanished.

This, then, is our answer to the question concerning the relations of these Egyptian mummies just discovered to the Evidences of Christianity. We leave the story now, and come clear back to the

text of the discourse. These strange, wrinkled, dry, swarthy objects, which have come up into the Museum at Bûlak, are not statues or effigies of Pharaohs that once lived and breathed as men; they are the Pharaohs themselves — the bodies without the souls. Where have the souls been during these silent years? What do you and I know about forty centuries? Oh, it is an awful reach of time, a dreadful section of eternity, when we try to think of it! "Pharaoh, king of Egypt, is but a noise; he hath let the appointed time pass." We learned long ago that a noise is one of those things in this world which never ends; it is a movement in the air that stretches out along the shore of infinity with waves, beating but never breaking, and hence never lost. A noise is very like a soul of man, in that it is the only thing we know of that is immortal. Remember always that a noise is not to be despised. Oh, it lasts so! Out in the air it wanders around, tireless, singing, wailing, sighing, vibrating — dying never, never! That is the way a soul lives on — be it Pharaoh's soul, or yours, or mine. Where has the king's soul been all this time? Where will your soul be, where will my soul be,

> When the earth is old, and the stars grow cold,
> And the leaves of the judgment-book unfold?

IV

THE FATHER OF "PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER."

And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.—Acts vii. 21.

SOMETIMES one life is made conspicuous by the illustriousness of a greater and better life, close by which it stands. Three persons in Scripture history are recorded by the name of "Pharaoh's Daughter." A single fact is common to them all: each was notable only from the company she kept, and each caught all the light of her otherwise tame and colorless career from her social surroundings and her titled position.

One of these needs only to be mentioned here in order to show in a sentence how much of a nothing she was. In a genealogical fragment, preserved in the Chronicles, we are informed that a man named Mered, of the sons of Ezra, married a woman named Bithiah, who was "a daughter of Pharaoh." But no one ever hears again of her; no one knows which of a long line of Pharaohs her father was; and not even Mered appears after this brief biography. Ezra's record is the only one to lift the rest.

Then there was Solomon's wife, whose name comes to us similarly: "And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall of Jerusalem round about. And his house where he dwelt had another court within the porch, which was of the like work. Solomon made also an house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken to wife, like unto this porch."

Some say this woman was treated with distinction for a while; but subsequently the king's conscience informed him that he had done wrong in contracting such a heathen alliance. Evidently she took all her glory from Solomon's splendor, and quickly subsided when he suppressed her: "And Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David unto the house that he had built for her: for he said, My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places are holy, whereunto the ark of the Lord hath come."

Then there was the third one mentioned, that one most familiarly known to us as the preserver of Moses. To her is given the rare honor of having been introduced into the New Testament history twice. In an epistle by Christ's greatest apostle, and in a defense by the Church's first martyr, she was handed down into a fame that she merited for the simple act of womanly benev-

olence she performed when she sent her servant for a drowning baby she heard crying in the sedge of the Nile.

All we know concerning this Egyptian princess, therefore, is illuminated by the wonderful career of the great law-giver Moses, and is valuable only because of the relation she sustained to him. The verse in the epistle to the Hebrews seems to intimate that she was alive and in some sort of power in the palace when Moses was compelled to escape into Midian; and that was forty years after he was lifted from the ark of bulrushes. Her life ran alongside of his during that molding period, and doubtless influenced that of the young Israelite in many particulars. She furnished him with his education; she gave him also the significant name "Moses," meaning "Saved," and she called him her son.

But now, who was she? More important still, whose "daughter" was she? What Pharaoh was on the throne when Moses was born, and so ruled in Egypt long enough back to be the father of the grown-up princess who took such generous care of him? We have already learned that Rameses II. was the Pharaoh who oppressed the people of God in the brick-yards, and made their lives wretched with fear. We suppose that Thermuthis was this royal lady's name, as Josephus records, and there is a general agreement among scholars that she must have been the sister of Rameses, and so, of course, the daughter of Seti I., his predecessor.

And what concerns us just now is the supreme fact that Seti himself appears among these strange creatures that have lately come forth in the discovery at Deir-el-Bahari; his mummy also was unrolled and identified last June in the city of Cairo. His uncovered face lies for the whole world to look upon in the Museum at Bûlak, but a little way off from the Nile where Moses was found. Imagine such a thing: seem a moment to yourself to be gazing on this body as it lies there exposed. This was the tyrant who sent forth commandment to put to death all of the male children of the Hebrews. That is the reason why Moses had to be hid in an ark of bulrushes, saved by being set afloat in the river. This man saw that his slaves, in despite of all he could do, were multiplying in the land; the Hebrew people were getting too thick for his comfort. He thinned them out by direct murder of their little ones at birth. He thought no more of such a crime than, if there had been too many worms on his fruit-trees, he would have thought of using sparrows to get rid of them, or burning up their nests with lighted torches. A human being was only a worm to him; he was Seti I., Pharaoh of Egypt.

It is best for us now to resume the quiet rehearsal of our story of the mummies, and describe all that needs to be told concerning this one. It had its adventures as did that of Rameses, and was moved several times, and lost one or two cases in the transits. The stone sarcophagus of this

man was found long ago by Belzoni, and is now kept in the Soane Museum in England. That is of the finest alabaster, and was carved out of a single block It is covered with incised hieroglyphic texts, and has upon its surface several hundred figures descriptive of the passage of the sun through the hours of the night. Only the inner mummy-case remains at present, and that is inscribed with three longitudinal rows of texts upon a white ground. It also bears the fac-simile of the king's features, surmounted by the royal crown and the snake symbols of majesty. Of these uræi it needs only to be said that they properly belonged only in the headpiece of a deity; but these dynastic monarchs all along the line assumed what they pleased. Horus slew the great serpent, so ran the mythologic legend; and was permitted to wear the image of that smitten foe as the symbol of sovereignty and triumph over the powers of evil. This figure of two asps Seti placed upon his own head, and Rameses employed it also on occasion afterward.

When the body was unbandaged, the same general arrangement as to the various coverings and shrouds was found to have been observed that had attracted attention in the embalmment of Rameses II. About midway of the total thickness of the wrappings there were disclosed two lines of hieratic inscription in black ink, stating that "in the year 9, the second month of Pert, the sixteenth day was the day of re-clothing the King

Men-ma-ra, to whom be life, and health, and strength." Pert then was the Egyptian season of seed-time, and Men-ma-ra is known from many sources to be another name for Seti I. And it certainly speaks a very courteous feeling of loyal kindness that these people wished to pass the compliment of life, health, and strength to a mummy that had been really so long dead. Another writing, left on one of the smaller bandages, adds that the linen used for the royal shrouds was furnished by the chief prophet of Amen Menkhopirri, in his sixth year of service.

On full disclosure, this mummy presents much the same appearance as that of Rameses. It is tall and fleshless, yellow-black in color, and it has the arms crossed upon the breast. In this instance the head was covered with a mask of delicate linen, blackened with bitumen so compact that it was necessary to remove it with scissors. It was a task of great niceness in skill to remove this shapeless mass; but the result of it was to bring to view the most beautiful mummy-head which ever found a place in the Museum. The sculptures of Thebes and Abydos did not flatter the Pharaoh when they gave him that refined, sweet and smiling profile which has always been the admiration of travelers.

After a lapse of thirty-two centuries the mummy retains the same expression that characterized the features of the living man; and most striking of all, when compared with the mummy of Rameses

II., is found to be the astonishing likeness between the father and son. The mouth, nose, chin, in short, all the features, are the same; but in the father they are more delicate, more intelligent, more spiritual than when so reproduced in the countenance of the son. Seti I. is, as it were, the idealized type of Rameses II. He must have died at an advanced period of life. The head is shaven; the eyebrows are white; the condition of the frame points to more than three-score years of vigorous existence, thus confirming the opinion of the learned, who have attributed a long reign to this king. The body seems healthy and strong, notwithstanding the knotty state of the fingers, which bear evident traces of gout.

Our minds are arrested here, as in the former case, with the realities of things, when we find ourselves in the actual presence of an aged monarch like this. It makes the Old Testament come forward as an indubitable piece of history. The chapters of Exodus lose their vague, myth-like character. Moses seems nearer to us, and begins to rank beside living personalities in modern history. This marvelous discovery adds the Pentateuch to our libraries as a veritable volume of national annals. We are not forbidden to criticize it; it claims no immunities at the bar of right reason and candid discussion. But it demands now, after these discoveries, that men shall not discuss its living men and women as if they were only the characters in some drama of a poet,

and that men shall not treat the whole history as if it were a bad play.

In reciting such particulars as are of interest to us in the biography of this king, it becomes necessary to transport ourselves away up the Nile, and once more enter the precincts of Thebes. Tourists agree in praising those columns of the Great Hall in the temple of Amon at Karnak, which even in their ruins are among the wonders of the oriental world. Dr. Brugsch is not exaggerating when he speaks of a hundred and thirty-four stone pillars, "of astonishing height and circumference, that still attract the admiration of our fastidious age." It was erected by Seti I. as the repository of his own pictorial history, and remains now as a matchless monument of his munificence, as well as a conspicuous proof of his insatiate personal vanity and ambition. We have the testimony of a supreme authority, that is, Fergusson, that no language can convey an idea of this building in its beauty, and no artist has yet been able to reproduce its form so as to convey, to those who have not looked upon it, an idea of its grandeur even in ruin. It is not the architecture of this edifice, however, that claims our most attentive interest, but the outer wall on the north side; there are to be seen, and now to be read, certain inscriptions which rehearse in an orderly way the exploits of this valiant but cruel monarch.

Only one inscription can be copied here, and that must be quoted in fragments. After a brilliant

battle-piece, representing wild hosts fiercely contending for mastery, and falling in slaughter, the characters of that strange alphabet of the ages long past trace out the story with many a flourish of ungovernable rhetoric: "These are the miserable inhabitants of the land of Khita. The king has prepared for them a mighty overthrow; for Pharaoh is a jackal which rushes leaping through the country, a grim lion that frequents the most hidden tracks of all regions, a powerful bull with a pair of sharpened horns. Pharaoh was victorious; great was his strength. His war-cry was like that of the son of Nut. He returns home in triumph; he has annihilated the peoples, he has struck to the ground the land of Khita, he has made an end of his adversaries. The enmity of all peoples is turned into amity; the terror of the king has penetrated them, his boldness has opened their hearts; the monarchs of those countries find themselves bound before him. Thou appearest like thy father, the Sun-god. Men live in thy glance. Long live the king, as long as lives the sun in heaven!"

Something has already been told, on a former occasion, about the association of his child Rameses with himself in actual rule, which in his later life this king ordered. It helps the historic accuracies in many respects if we bear this constantly in mind. There is also given another inscription, belonging to a later period, which makes in an address to Rameses the Great a new allusion to his history: "Thou wert a lord of this land. And

thou actedst wisely, when thou wert still in the egg. In thy childhood what thou saidst took place for the welfare of the land. When thou wert a boy, with the youth's locks of hair, no monument saw the light without thy command; no business was done without thy knowledge. Thou wert raised to be a governor of the land when thou wert a youth, and countedst ten full years." This is only saying over again what Rameses had said of himself in the middle of a lengthy inscription, discovered at Abydos: "My father presented me publicly to the people; I was a boy on his lap, and he spake thus: I will have him crowned as king, for I desire to behold his grandeur, while I am still alive. Then came forward the courtiers to place the double crown upon my head. And my father said: Place the regal circlet on his brow."

In the Museum of the Louvre at Paris there are two fine reliefs, representing Rameses II., that help in this illustration. One of them shows the prince as a youth in some measure advanced beyond the twelve years at which the date of his coronation is fixed. He is standing by the side of a lion, and holds a bow in his hand. But he still wears a plait of hair of that peculiar form of arrangement which among the ancient Egyptians was the distinguishing emblem that was laid aside when one attained manhood. In the other fragment of stone, the boy is made known as a king by the uræus or asp surmounting his crest, and by certain titles carved around him. But he is still a mere infant in size,

he wears the long dangling tress of hair, and he carries his finger at his mouth in the suggestive way they employed to signify childhood.

It does not seem worth while for us just now to attempt any further rehearsal of the dreary annals which are filled only with bombastic narratives of battles and carnage, all testifying to the harshness and cruelty of this king Seti I. There is nothing of him anywhere recorded that wins respect or forbearance. He seems a plausible, false, hypocritical, relentless creature from the beginning to the end of his career. On the wall of the temple in Abydos there is a sculpture representing Seti in the act of offering to Osiris the miniature image of the goddess Ma, the divinity of truth and justice. This figure has, as usual in votive presents, certain peculiarities intended to show those spiritual attitudes and experiences which the penitent and devout king wished on such an occasion to display. So this small divinity is represented with eyes unbandaged, for justice was not going to be considered blind; she is on her knees before the superior deity, that it may appear how humble this great monarch condescends to be; she sits in an open sacrificial bowl, to make it clear that he has performed the mysterious rites of atonement; she wears on her head the ostrich feather, as the symbol of perfect purity, and she holds in her hand the significant emblem of eternal life. The king presents this little goddess a suppliant mediator between himself and

Osiris, the judge of the soul at the final award of the future. So he assumes to plead that his career has been sinless, his motive just, his devotion unswerving; and he is now deprecating the solemnities of that condemnation in the under-world which king, courtier, or slave would have equal reason to dread. Most persons who visit this picture comment upon the obsequious, satisfied, smiling, complacent countenance of the monarch as he enters his argument for a hearing and favorable sentence at the bar of final appeal.

He was a hypocrite and a despot to the last. With this pretense of piety, with this attempt to shrive his soul, working his poor religion to the utmost it would bear in behalf of so confirmed a sinner against every law, human and divine, this oppressor of Israel went out, a disembodied spirit, from this body we have found just lately, into the realms of mystery, of which we all know so little. He died suddenly in the midst of the work of building his own tomb, which Rameses, his son and associate, was decent enough to finish afterward like a palace in wonderful splendor. He died, this old tyrant, and was mourned according to court custom for seventy-two days, we suppose; was borne to the sepulcher through throngs of people that howled dreadfully, as if they could possibly be sorry. And then all the priests clapped their hands in sacerdotal joy to think and proclaim that his soul flew up like one of their beautiful birds into the Egyptian heaven, to enjoy a

glorious existence in the bark of the sun. This man is called in inscriptions, fashioned by artists whom he paid while he was living, "the Son of the Sun, the Lord of Diadems, the favorite of Ptah, the Good Deity, Sovereign of Two Worlds, and Eternal as the Sun itself." And yet all that is left of him on earth is this pitiable old mummy, shriveled and dry. We look at his body, and we irresistibly say to each other, "This king slew thousands of little children for no reason except being born, and every death was a crime against humanity and against God; he drove his fellow-men to agony and miserable pain by injustice and wrong." So we dismiss him to shame of honest men and kind women while the ages run.

Let us try to think of something better before we end this story of Seti's career. What became of Thermuthis, "Pharaoh's daughter," in whose life, under God's providence, Moses' life was at a critical hour bound up? We raise the question, but we cannot answer it clearly. It is said by some that she was a mature woman, a widow, and childless in her own history. And others say, with some inscriptions on the stones to give them authority, that she was the wife as well as the sister of Rameses II. Such matters were not inconsistent with Egyptian morality in those days of the Pharaohs. We cannot decide. Where she lived, or when she died, we are not able to tell. But we certainly think of her kindly. To go away to-night with only the memory of Seti in mind will

leave us indignant, contemptuous, and vexed. No man is outside of the world's execrations who can stoop to harm the Lord's little ones. And no woman is beyond the world's kindness in judgment whose heart is affectionate enough to dare censure for helping a babe that is in peril. We go away thinking of Thermuthis, and we feel happier. It makes each one of us wish he was gentler to all men, tenderer and milder, more alive to other's sorrows. It makes us wish we were better and manlier, purer and nobler. And we do most heartily pray that, if ever our careers are challenged and our epitaphs written, some charitable record may say of us, "Here was one who loved God, and loved his fellow-man."

V

RAMESES THE GREAT.

Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.—Exodus i. 8.

IT is generally agreed that this verse means a new dynasty rather than just a fresh man. A considerable space must have passed since Joseph died in order that his glory should have vanished utterly into forgetfulness. How could any one have lost the knowledge of the great Zaphnath-paaneah, whose provident wisdom had saved the empire in severities of famine? If it be true that Amenhotep IV. was the Pharaoh who placed the children of Israel in Goshen, and installed their persecuted brother at the practical head of the nation, then there must now be reckoned Rameses I., and after him Seti I., and so we should reach the reign of Rameses II., the Great Rameses, or the Sesostris of history.

It seems quite probable that this monarch was a valiant captain, for the fame of his conflicts with the Hittites and the Ethiopians has come down to modern times from several sources. But we are constrained to say that he himself took serious

care to increase his reputation by all the ordinary methods of advertisement. He appears never to have permitted any one of his achievements to be missed for lack of adequacy in the public statement of particulars. For example, he fought the worst battle he had to encounter when he was leading an expedition against Kadesh, away over in Syria, north of Mount Lebanon. When, after hard experiences, he reached his own tranquil capital, he spread abroad the tidings with vast inscriptions upon the monuments all over Egypt.

And what he said on one of them was this: "I became like the god *Mentu;* I hurled the javelins with my right hand; I fought with my left hand; I was like Baal in his time before their sight. I had come upon two thousand five hundred pairs of horses; I was in the midst of them; but they were dashed in pieces before my steeds; not one of them raised his hand to contend with me; their courage was sunken in their bosoms; their limbs gave way. They could not hurl the dart, nor had they strength to thrust the spear. I made them plunge into the waters like crocodiles; they tumbled down on their faces one after another. I dispatched them at my pleasure, so that no one looked behind him; nor even did any turn round. Each fell, and none raised himself up again."

That was Rameses the Great; he was telling of himself; he was an intelligent biographer, if any one could be; he was that sort of hero. Let him introduce himself to you: you will have to meet

him again. We must just move on with our modern story now about the mummies.

The commonplace description of the catalogue is all we need when we talk about the appearance of this dead king. The mummy was in perfect preservation, although it had been quite a traveler in its history. Rameses II. died about thirteen centuries before the Christian era. The papyri relate that he was buried with his grandfather and his father in the royal sepulcher, hewn out of the limestone cliffs in what was called the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings. This was situated in a deep gorge behind the western hills of the plain near Thebes. It is a grand, lonesome ravine, the very ideal of desolation. The grave of this monarch was splendid as a palace. They walled up the portals and left him in the silence. For two centuries at least the body lay with its robes and spices undisturbed. Then there came a time of horror in the kingdom. Tomb-breakers were in the ascendant. In one of the preserved papyri there is given us in full the confession of a robber, who frankly told what his unclean profession used to do. This is what his own story reveals: "The tomb was surrounded by masonry, and covered in with roofing-stones. We demolished it, and found the august king with his divine ax beside him, his amulets and ornaments of gold about his neck; his head was covered with gold, and his person was entirely covered with gold; his coffins were overlaid with gold and silver,

within and without, and incrusted with all kinds of precious stones. We took the gold, which we found on the sacred person of this god, as also his amulets and ornaments. And having likewise found his royal wife, what was upon her we took; and we set fire to their mummy-cases, and we also seized on their furniture, their vases of gold, silver, and bronze; and these," the rascal adds coolly, "we divided amongst ourselves."

For the sake of security, then, the body of Rameses was moved away from his own catacomb into that of his father, Seti I. There it abode for ten years. Some priests visited it, and reported its safety; but the three bodies of Seti, Rameses I., and Rameses II. were removed to the tomb of queen Ansera. There they remained ten years more; then they were taken to the sepulcher of Amenhotep; and six years after the deposit were brought back home whence they started. Nobody knows anything more about changes; but at last the whole royal family found its way to this deeply concealed tenement at Deir-el-Bahari under the Theban hills, where they have lain packed for these three thousand years. It seems probable that the reason of this crowding of so many together here is to be found in this peril from the body-snatchers of that day.

Of course, therefore, the present coffin was not the original in which Rameses was buried. But it is very neat and plain, according to the taste of the later dynasties. It is made of sycamore-wood,

unpainted and unvarnished, and has upon its top a sort of semblance or shape of the human being it incloses; but it represents Rameses in the attitude or posture of Osiris. The crossed arms rest upon the breast. In the right hand is the royal flail, and in the left the royal crook, both of these being emblems of divinity, and intimating the assumption of divine honors by this king, never over-modest in his pretensions. The features are quite delicately and beautifully carved into likeness of a face; the eyes are inserted in enamel, while the eyebrows, beard, and eyelashes are painted black. The mummy itself was tastefully and even exquisitely wrapped in rose-colored and orange linen, of a matchless texture, finer than the most gauze-like muslin; and upon this lotos-flowers were profusely strewn. A white linen band was drawn across the shrouds to keep them in place, and this bore the name and history.

Of course, the moment that the fact was established concerning a discovery so important as this, there arose a feeling of curiosity almost uncontrollable to have the coverings removed, that the actual form of the Pharaoh who oppressed Israel might be seen. But there had been an incident of a peculiar nature which kept the authorities in a sober reserve. One of the mummies had been already unswathed, and while the process was going on, decomposition began. There was hardly time for a photograph to be taken before the whole body lost its form and figure,

and scattered itself away into dust; the entire features vanished like an apparition. The director felt a serious regret and remorse under a surprise so ruinous, and rightly stayed his hand in an instance so important as that of the great war-monarch of his dynasty and age. When finally it was resolved to unroll the bandages, a notable assembly was convened in order to give the act dignity. The Khedive of Egypt, with the High Commissioners of Turkey and of Great Britain, and many of the officials resident in Cairo, representatives of the other nations, interested themselves in the ceremony, gracing it with their presence.

After the verification by the Khedive of the outer winding-sheet of the mummy in the sight of the other illustrious personages, the initial wrapping was removed, and there was disclosed a band of stuff or strong cloth rolled all around the body; next to this was a second envelop sewed up and kept in place by narrow bands at some distance each from each; then came two thicknesses of small bandages; and then a new winding-sheet of linen, reaching from the head to the feet. Upon this a figure representing the goddess Nut, more than a yard in length, had been drawn in red and white color, as prescribed by the ritual for the dead. Beneath this amulet there was found one more bandage; when that was removed, a piece of linen alone remained, and this was spotted with the bituminous matter used by the embalmers; so at

last it was evident that Rameses the Great was close by — under his shroud. It seems solemn and pathetic to think of the way in which cool science shreds away from the real man all the mere adornments and factitious shows that an opulent or adulatory world may have laid over him when he died. It is just so that history deals with every one of us. What is false or only accidental it does not pause to heed or respect. It is the character that is looked after, the man precisely as he has lived and died.

The enthusiasm grew thoughtful and reverent at this point. With only the decent covering of a linen shroud between his form and the epoch, Rameses II. lay completely in the power of a generation of human beings that was going to review his case once more as it stood in forgotten history; only a layer of cloth represented three thousand years of decorous and forbearing silence — covering his face and his crimes. There is always something sad and soul-subduing in the presence of the great shadow of death. A corpse is the most pathetic thing human eyes ever look upon. It has an infinite majesty of appeal lodged in merely the helplessness and the defenselessness of it. Think of the historic changes which had passed over the world since that linen cloth was put around the form of the king. Think what civilizations stood facing an old era like his. Christianity was confronting the despot who refused to recognize Jehovah as the Supreme Monarch of the universe,

and in an august moment of tremendous decision was going to pronounce its righteous judgment on his life according to the light of the New Testament.

A single clip of the scissors, and the king was fully disclosed. The head is long and small in proportion to the body. The top of the skull is quite bare. On the temple there are a few sparse hairs, but at the poll the hair is quite thick, forming smooth, straight locks about two inches in length. White at the time of death, they have been dyed a light yellow by the spices used in embalmment. The forehead is low and narrow; the brow-ridge prominent; the eyebrows are thick and white; the eyes are small and close together; the nose is long, thin, arched like the noses of the Bourbons; the temples are sunken; the cheek-bones very prominent; the ears round, standing far out from the head, and pierced, like those of a woman, for the wearing of ear-rings; the jawbone is massive and strong; the chin very prominent; the mouth small but thick lipped; the teeth worn and very brittle, but white and well preserved. The mustache and beard are thin. They seem to have been kept shaven during life, but were probably allowed to grow during the king's last illness; or they may have grown after death. The hairs are white, like those of the head and eyebrows, but are harsh and bristly, and a tenth of an inch in length. The skin is of earthy brown splotched with black.

Finally, it may be said the face of the mummy gives a fair idea of the face of the living king. The expression is unintellectual, perhaps slightly animal; but, even under mummification, there is plainly to be seen an air of sovereign majesty, of resolve, and of pride. The rest of the body is as well preserved as the head; but, in consequence of the reduction of the tissues, its external aspect is less life-like. He was over six feet in height. The chest is broad; the shoulders are square; the arms are crossed upon the breast; the hands are small and dyed with henna. The legs and thighs are fleshless; the feet are long, slender, somewhat flat-soled, and dyed, like the hands, with henna. The corpse is that of an old man, but of a vigorous and robust old man.

And thus our story of this mighty dead king is ended for the moment. They photographed the face and figure, and the pictures of that ancient monarch are already afloat in the wide world. Then the entire case and records and mummy were left lying in state in the Bûlak collection of curious histories from the past ages. The troop of tourist gazers has begun its procession along before the relics. If the world stands for three thousand years longer, there will be generation after generation going along by the strange uncouth group, each looking upon the countenance of this old man, and each making its candid comments.

This sovereign had unusual chances in life; his father had associated him with himself in the king-

dom when he was ten or twelve years old; and these two had reigned conjointly for near a quarter of a century. So Rameses had all the advantage of his father's experience, as well as the opportunity of learning lessons of prudence and kingcraft, in view of possible mistakes the old tyrant was making. He outlived a sire so accommodating by more than forty years; and yet we find only a mean misery of repetition in his sins against the people, and a fiendish ingenuity of his own in the invention of new oppressions that went quite beyond his father's. He was rather a builder by profession than a warrior; and this gave him occasion for all those diabolical wickednesses that are recorded of him in the book of Exodus. He kept Israel under desperate burdens of carrying brick and digging black clay until the nation groaned in its irrepressible agony under the task-masters.

The man was an incarnation of selfishness. To him there was but one being in the universe for whom he needed to care one groat; only a single will was to be consulted, only a single man's comfort was to be sought; he himself was the sole center of all things. Man's strength, and woman's honor, life, wealth, time, and ease of other men, went for his personal glorification. And now the world looks at him, and gives him his due, in the light of the charities and decencies God commands. "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after." We raise no question concerning the

divine retributions brought upon Rameses after he died. We are thinking just now of the show he makes before the public opinion of the human race he defied. What do you rate him at as a valuable king in the reckoning of the centuries? He spent sixty-seven years in reigning over millions of men, women, and children; every one of those poor suffering creatures "sighed by reason of the bondage." He lived across a century, almost from tip to tip of it, measuring its capabilities. At last he died, having exhausted his chances. What do you think of him? Let us repeat the words once spoken by the wisest man that ever lived: "Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him; but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow: because he feareth not before God."

The shadows of the room deepen as we leave them. Kings are only men; queens are but women; the world is made up of both; God lives and reigns over all. Perhaps some of you will deign to remember that each one of us here is human. Two or three questions must come up at last.

What do we mean when we speak of "a hard man"? One of the visitors who saw that mummy unrolled, a cool, quiet German, wrote afterward this clause of description: "The expression of

the features is that of a man of decided, almost tyrannical, character." That ought to be so. This is the despot who ordered that the tally of bricks should remain undiminished, while his slaves should have to forage for their own necessity of straw. He was "a hard man." Is any one of us hard? Do we need to be kings in order to have that name? Can one be hard upon his clerks, his journeymen, his neighbors, in so far as he has power?

So, again, does "a man of decided, almost tyrannical, character" fashion and fix his character in the "expression of his features"? Do you recognize "a hard man" by his looks, when you set eyes upon him in ordinary life? Will one's disposition grow on him, until it shows itself in his forehead, his lips, his chin, the poise of his proud head? Do you imagine that your associates or neighbors ever become afraid to ask favors of you? Are poor people timid or abashed when they come to counsel with you concerning your will about them? Is there a hush instantly in the shop or the counting-room as your step is heard on the stairs? As years pass, are your features growing heavier and colder?

Furthermore, is it on the body alone that character makes an impression? Is it possible that, even unconsciously to ourselves, soul as well as body is becoming indurate and chilly? Is money forcing features on our inner life and being? As we rise in life, do we grow interested in others;

unselfish, gentle, forbearing in our judgments, or stiff, and rigid, and violent, and impatient of others' successes?

And finally: if character thus perpetuates itself in the soul as well as on the body, is there anything disclosed to us of the world to come which will avail to change the destiny we have fashioned? On the day royal Rameses was buried, they wrapped his aged bald head in cerements, and covered him in the shadows. He comes up now after some awful centuries of silence, and he looks just as he used to look. It is likely his soul has not grown different either. We know nothing about his future. It is ours that concerns us. What is going to change any lineament of soul in the mysterious Hereafter? Is there any truth for us to ponder in those serious words in the last chapter of the Bible: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still"?

VI

GOD'S PURPOSE WITH MENEPHTAH.

Then the Lord said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh.—Exodus vi. 1.

HELPING a foolish man against his own will is often the most perilous sort of neighborly enterprise. After the decree was issued that Israel must furnish the same tally of bricks as before, but straw must no longer be expected from the Government, the trouble deepened. Then the distressed and unreasonable slaves visited the whole increase upon Moses and Aaron; an official deputation was sent to them to complain: "And the officers of the children of Israel did see that they were in evil case, after it was said, Ye shall not minish aught from your bricks of your daily task. And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh: and they said unto them, The Lord look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savor to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us."

Moses had not yet become "the meekest man" in the world, as he was afterwards reported to be: he seems to have been considerably moved with

petulance within under the sense of injustice which such an accusation provoked. He took his case to a higher court, and there entered a deprecation which really was a discharge of this hurt-feeling upon God. He shifted the responsibility of the failure with Pharaoh, and entered direct expostulation concerning his own very embarrassing appointment: "And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil-entreated this people? why is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all." Nothing surprises us more than the infinite patience with which such a form of address was received by the Almighty. He does not indeed condescend to the humiliation of defending himself against the accusation of having acted falsely; but he bears with his feeble servant as if he knew he had been tried almost beyond human strength; he speaks up with an unmistakable ring of encouragement in his voice, and tells him that there is now going to be a turn in affairs which will justify him as a long-suffering God; Israel shall soon learn what his purpose had been: "Then the Lord said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land."

After this there is in the inspired narrative detailed to us the substance of an interview between

Moses and the Lord, in which the new name of Jehovah is once more announced as containing the whole mystery of these august transactions, and affording an explanation of what had hitherto been a secret to the people. This contest was between Pharaoh and himself, and the bondage of Israel was only an occasion of outbreak. The chosen nation should soon be delivered, Canaan should very surely be their inheritance, and the Lord should be their God. But it remained that they must be calm, for ere long they should see the full salvation of their wives and children, and Egypt's king should fall.

It is necessary now that we should recall that the name of Pharaoh — this Pharaoh with whom the story of the Exodus of Israel has to do — was Menephtah (Meri-en-Ptah), a name meaning "beloved of Ptah," or a favorite of the Creator. The monuments inform us that Rameses II. had several so-called wives, and one hundred and sixty-two children, of whom one hundred and eleven were males. Menephtah is reckoned to have been his immediate successor, his thirteenth son, and (so far as we know) the only man after him in the dynasty worth noting. Menephtah is the unfortunate king of whom history has had to say that he belongs to the number of those monarchs whose memory has been with difficulty preserved by a few monuments of inferior value, and by a few inscriptions of but little importance. The main significance of this man centers in a majestic fact;

he was "raised up" by God for the career he ran on earth. He took his fame from his tyranny, his conspicuousness from his guilt. His importance in history arises from his desperate conflict with God.

It is much to be regretted that the mummy of this man was not in the pile of those found at Deir-el-Bahari. Menephtah's tomb is at the mournful city of Thebes, but no one can say positively that he was ever laid in it. Even the greatest scholars differ point-blank in their opinions. Nothing has been discovered concerning the time or the manner of his death, and no one can tell whether he was buried at all; it was the common custom for a monarch to erect his tomb during his life. There is an impatient curiosity in our minds when we urge the question as to these missing links in the dynasties. Where is the body of Thotmes I. and all the rest of the Pharaohs along in the various lines of genealogy and succession? Would it not be likely that, when so singular a care was exercised over the safety of these kings and queens already uncovered, some sort of solicitude would be felt concerning such notable people as the other Thotmes, and the other Rameses, as well as concerning this Menephtah? Are they concealed somewhere else in those awful caverns beneath the rocks along the Nile? Mariette-Bey, the illustrious predecessor of Monsieur Maspero, used to say that the great sacerdotal edifices on the west bank of the river, across from Luxor and

Karnak, were to be considered memorial chapels pertaining to the tombs of their builders. He had a theory that subterranean galleries, winding around beneath them, might one day be found, connecting these temples with the sepulchers on the farther side of the hill. This burial-place at Deir-el-Bahari is just behind the temple of Hatasû. And some enthusiastic writers even now believe that there may be discoveries in store for us quite as wonderful as any ever yet made, if only the persistent excavations shall disclose similar tunnels leading through the heart of the mountain, anciently fashioned in connection with the temples at Gûrneh, Medinet-Habû, and even the vast Ramesseum itself.

Still, although the mummy of this last distinguished king of the dynasty for a few years more may not be brought to light, and perhaps never, much of the help in identification we needed has already been gained. For the dates and the successions have been established in many difficult cases. And small particulars are what give the archæologist his enthusiasms, for they are precisely what is necessary for joining great ones together. And then, once we know that Menephtah was the real Pharaoh at the moment when Israel made the Exodus, all that the monuments have said elsewhere about the man comes into play. History has been grouping items together for hundreds of years concerning him. For example, Herodotus has recorded that this weak and haughty creature

was once so violent in temper that "he impiously hurled a spear into the overflowing waves of the river, which a sudden wind caused to rise to an unusual height"; and for this he was instantly smitten with blindness that lasted ten years — a condign punishment for his spite and godlessness.

Such stories as this have all the more strength as illustrations of Scripture just because of their incidental mention. Even if they eventually prove inaccurate as facts, they show the popular notion concerning the man, for traditions always assume the general characteristics of the individual whom they commemorate. Even in our own time a new anecdote finds its way into print; it pictures a president or philanthropist or commander or statesman as a praying man or a witty man, a generous giver or a parsimonious churl; it is a quiet testimony most incontrovertible as to the reality of the peculiarity it shows, and it owes its force to its artlessness and undesignedness in the relation.

Suppose that the monuments had represented Menephtah as quiet in temper, modest in behavior, lavish in expenditure, and kind in disposition toward his dependents, what a howl of derision would be raised about the picture Moses had given of him in the Exodus! We know, perhaps as thoroughly as we know concerning any Scripture character, what were the personal attributes of disposition and propensity of this familiar individual; for the Bible has told us how he behaved

toward Moses, toward his slaves, toward God. We are interested to know exactly how he shows out on the monuments and in the annals of former times.

As a matter of fact, there is only one inscription of Menephtah, of any conspicuous length, which belongs to his own reign. He appears to have been one of the very few monarchs not given to recording military exploits performed by his subalterns and credited to himself. In this one case, the account is furnished of the Libyan war; but in that this man was not in person engaged. The general impression any reader would receive is that of Menephtah's positive cowardice. He was false and hypocritical, weak, vacillating; he was accustomed to break promises without warning or apology; the histories, whether indited by himself or others writing about him, prove him to have been irascible, an unjust judge, oppressive and merciless. One of the chief French writers, in describing the invasion of the Libyans, gives us an example of this characteristic poltroonery. He says: "Sending forward in advance, first of all, his chariot-force and his light-armed auxiliaries, Pharaoh agreed to join the battle array with the bulk of his troops at the end of fourteen days: but, personally, he was not fond of actual fight in the field, and disliked exposing himself to the chance of defeat. A vision of the deity Ptah, which he saw in a dream, warned him that his lofty rank required him not to cross the stream;

he therefore sent his army to the combat under the command of some of his father's generals, who were still living." This last expression will possibly help us in some measure in our consideration whether it is likely that so prudent a general would in person lead his troops in pursuit of the Israelites across the Red Sea, and rush into the opened path in the mighty waters under the midnight, or would commit the perilous command to some brave subaltern whose life was less precious to himself than his own.

Another characteristic of this Pharaoh, as shown by secular history and suggested by the monuments, is his superstitiousness. It has quite a prominence in all the mention made of him. We are told by Lenormant that he was neither a soldier nor an administrator, but a man whose mind was turned almost exclusively toward the chimeras of sorcery and magic, resembling in this respect his brother, Khamuas. In the most exact agreement with historical truth is the book of Exodus, when it depicts him as surrounded by priest-magicians, with whom Moses contends in the working of prodigies in order to affect his mind.

Then add the witness these inscriptions make to Menephtah's cruelty. He himself says, in one of these stone records, that when he was engaged in the Cushite war, he "slaughtered the people and set fire to them, and netted, as men net birds, the entire country." The last expression employed here means that he caught and swept away into

slavery the whole mass of the population, as if he had dragged them barbarously off from their home soil and reduced them to abject bondage in a foreign land. It is not easy to discriminate this particular monarch, among such a multitude of pictures as that age presents, from those of whom he was the successor; he appears in common with Seti and Rameses, sometimes alluded to in the same general history. Always, always the same sad grouping is offered. Gangs of laborers, abject and suffering under intolerable burdens, are seen with task-masters standing above; a whip whirls in the air, a stick is applied to the naked backs and over the bare shoulders, when the scant heap of bricks shows a short tally. The work is violently hard, the sun is hot, the food is insufficiently provided. These things are perpetuated by the monarch's own sculptors, on imperishable stone, as if they constituted evidences of his imperial supremacy, and had no bearing as proofs of his despotism and shame.

Thus, then, we have this Pharaoh before our imagination just as these uncovered monuments depict him. Who does not see that the history of Menephtah, as Moses has presented it, illustrates exactly these three features of cruelty, cowardice, and superstition with even more detailed and persistent exposure? There is in this fact something far beyond a mere correspondence: it fashions itself into an argument, actually majestic, for the truth of the inspired word. It confirms

that whole book of Exodus with a corroboration drawn from outside sources.

But when we move on into a disquisition concerning the remaining biography of this king, we are confronted with a question, meant to be crushing: Is there on the monuments any allusion to the Hebrews as ever having been in Egypt, ever having been oppressed, ever having found a defender in the almighty Jehovah so potent as to overthrow the army and menace the life of the monarch on the throne of the empire? Most of the small skeptics urge this point with vehemence and pertinacity.

No: there is no clear mention made of them; why should there ever be expected any such thing? Who made the monuments? Who caused an inscription to be put on any stone? Who chose the events which should be handed down to the ages? Was any Egyptian king ever known to cause his own humiliation to be graven with a pen of iron in the rock forever? In modern times a defeated monarch can, perhaps, hush up his mortifications in the official sheets of his realm; but his enemies shout them out through their own trumpets with spiteful disclosure. For the types are cheap, and the journals are willing. But it would have been instant death for any man to speak to the king's dispraise in those idolatrous days when the king set himself down as a deity between images of the gods and claimed adoring wonder. And are men arguing seriously when they insist that Pharaoh

should talk about his slaves on an erected column, after they had sunk his forces in the Red Sea? Only a mention is made of a people called Aperu or Apuriu; and these letters, put into Hebrew, do somewhat resemble the Hebrew name. We do not profess to find much meaning in this; but it may go for what it is worth. The severest objection against the identification is the fact that, after the Exodus is over, the name of the Aperu yet appears occasionally on the slabs. There may have been some Israelites who would not leave the country with Moses, for there were some that sighed to come back.

Two things are noticeable, however: there are in the history now no military operations for full forty years; and during all that time, so far as we know, there are no new buildings erected. The army of Egypt was destroyed utterly with one grand overwhelming, and the slaves who did the building went out, two millions at once, in the midnight.

And there is little left to say concerning Menephtah. The later years of his reign were disturbed with insurrection and dissensions of serious force. A pretender, so says one historian, usurped the kingdom and held the throne for five years against Menephtah's son. Then there was a weak restoration; but the wretched fight closed with only a pitiful display of power, and at last the dynasty was overthrown forever.

We have raised the question, and something must be said about it before we leave his story —

was Menephtah drowned in the Red Sea on the night of the Exodus of Israel? In one verse the Bible seems to say so; a fragment of a psalm asserts that God "overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea." We do not know who was the author of this song, used in the temple service, but it is conceded to have been composed several hundred years after the event took place; and, to say the most concerning it, it is not history but poetry, and must rank alongside of a verse quite similar, in which the poet writes that "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera." Such forms of expression are frequent in all languages, and cannot be forced, unsupported, into proofs of so extraordinary a fact. The stars did not fight in a human battle; this is understood to be an oriental way of saying there was a severe storm during the contest at Esdraelon. The psalms were all elastic in their phraseology, and must not be forced just to countenance a mere theory. Furthermore, the margin in our English version says that the word that is rendered "overthrew" might be translated "shook off," and the Revision perpetuates the same substitution in the same place. The passage would seem to some even more graphic, if we were to read that the Lord "shook off Pharaoh and his host into the Red Sea." That would suggest the stoppage of the pursuit with even greater picturesqueness.

Furthermore, when we turn to the calm narrative of Moses in Exodus, we read nothing of this destruction of the king in person. There is a

most careful discrimination in the language in each mention made: "And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them: there remained not so much as one of them." It is very significant here that we find the exact word employed which we had given in the psalm; the same marginal reference is added, as we found it there also,—the Lord "overthrew the Egyptians"; that is, "the Lord shook off the Egyptians," — but not a word about Pharaoh. So, again: "And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them, to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses." Those who went in were the ones that were drowned; not Pharaoh. Those who were drowned were cast up on the shore; not Pharaoh.

Does anybody imagine his name would have been omitted if he had been lying there?

Only one more remark in elucidation: when we come to the song of Moses — a song so celebrated

that in the Apocalypse it was joined with the song of the redeemed, "the song of Moses and the Lamb" — we see no mention made of Menephtah's death in person; not even an implication: "And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her, with timbrels, and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." Then the sister of that great leader takes up the strain in her turn: "Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea; his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them." Not an allusion to Pharaoh in person as having been drowned. Such intelligent omissions are inconceivable if the king were already dead.

There we leave the question. It would have been easily settled, if only Menephtah's mummy had been found there with the rest. Perhaps it will be found before long, as these excavations move on. But there is nothing hanging upon it. The glory of his realm has passed into an impenetrable silence. This Pharaoh, like the others, was but a noise.

We take our portion with the frightened host of slaves on the other side of the water. There is safety; they are the people of God.

VII

THE DISCOVERY OF PITHOM.

And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.
—Exodus i. 11.

A CANAL is only a canal, the world over. But some canals have an advantage over some others in picturesqueness and variety of dull life along the course of them. The Suez Canal is rather the most unfortunate to be found upon the world's map, for it possesses positively none of the ordinary alleviations for the tameness of its kind. A sail upon it is about the most unromantic of all tourist experiences in Egypt or out of it. Embarking at Suez in one of the small steamers that, on occasion, ply between certain localities, travelers push their commonplace way along for four or six hours under the hot sunshine, and then are quite satisfied to go ashore and wait for another day to finish an enterprise too stupid to awake the least enthusiasm in any human soul.

For the transit is confined between two high heaps of yellow and sometimes glittering sand, that actually bound the horizon on either side. The sail is simply unendurable, but for the repute

of saying, in after rehearsal of exploits, that one had accomplished the thing in the orthodox style. Occasionally the banks are lower, and then from deck-outlooks, extemporized for the opportunity offered, one can look out a moment over the ridge and catch a forlorn glimpse of the reach of more sand, stretching away into limitless desert. Now and then, especially in the neighborhood of the lakes, some curious water-fowls become visible, stalking along with thin red legs in the margin of the swamp. A most suggestive spectacle, however, through the entire length of water communication, is found in the mighty dredging-machines, strung interminably on in rows beside the shores, many of them ceaselessly laboring, with creaking noise of their pumps and dash of muddy mixtures of sand and reeds over behind the barriers, to keep the channel clear for use. We counted forty-two of these at one time, trying to while away a dull forenoon, and paused at the end of an hour or two only because we grew fatigued with the enumeration. These show at once what has been found the greatest difficulty in maintaining this open way between the seas. If it be borne in mind, it will always help to clear our thoughts as to a proper understanding of the drift of sands and the change of landscape in a region lying so close to the wastes and wildernesses of Egypt.

About half-way down in the journey, one reaches the site of that sudden growth of population and fertility to which the modern name of Ismailiya

has been given, now familiar to the traveling world. During the time of constructing the canal this little village became the center of the works, and the various contractors resided there. Officials and traders constantly came and went. The business of the place in an amazingly short period rose and fell, so that this "wonder of the desert" was almost forgotten. Now lately it has come up again, and beautiful gardens have been planted upon the wastes of sand, redeemed from the surrounding desolation by means of generous irrigation and labor.

This welcome town is a convenient spot on any modern map of that part of Egypt where the history of the Exodus began, by which we shall be able to fix our notions of the localities that have become suddenly famous in these latter days. Twelve miles below it, on the south side of the sweet water canal running through the Wadi Tumilat from Suez to Cairo, there are the ruins of a few European houses, marking the location of another of those settlements of engineers and laborers, flourishing while the canal work was going on, and abandoned afterward. A name was attached to the spot by the Arabs, Tell-el-Maskhutah, meaning "the mound of the statue." There was in sight there a group fashioned with considerable skill and evidently very old. One of the French engineers who surveyed Egypt at the end of the last century gave a somewhat enthusiastic description of it as it appeared then. He said the monu-

ment consisted of a monolith of granite, cut in the form of an arm-chair, on which were seated three Egyptian figures, apparently belonging to the priestly order; he judged from their costume, and the caps they wore. This was buried to the middle; but he dug down into the sand to the foot, so that he was able to see the whole of it and measure its proportions. The back of the chair was covered with hieroglyphics, which had the semblance of a regular and complete picture. The inscriptions upon this sculpture have been deciphered and published again and again since then; and these show that the three figures represent Rameses II. sitting between two sun-gods, Ra and Tum.

From the fact that this well-known historic monarch had reckoned himself among the deities, some of the early scholars were wont to say that he was himself the local divinity of the ancient city; and it was natural for them to conclude that this city was the one called Raamses in the Bible, built during the time of the bondage of Israel. In this later day the men that De Lesseps gathered around him held the old designation without much study as a mere name for the spot where the workers congregated. So, when, still later, the insurrection under Arabi took up its quarters in this neighborhood, and earth-works were constructed close beside the canal, the war bulletins used the same appellation to announce the battles, and on the maps it found its place as Ramses. A little later on, these

objects with some others were moved into Ismailiya, where they now stand in one of the public squares. This granite monolith, a notable tablet of similar red stone, two sphinxes of black granite, a naos of red sandstone, containing a recumbent sphinx with a human head attached to it, rising from the floor, are to be seen there as remnants of the old groups that were in sight for many years.

In 1883, Monsieur Edouard Naville, a Genevese explorer, even then of no mean reputation, was employed by the Egypt Exploration Fund as a fitting person to go to the site of Tanis and commence investigations. He set out upon his mission, but found that he was too late in the exact season for working to undertake so extensive a task that year. A thought occurred to him that the time need not be lost; he decided upon an excavation of this old mound at Tell-el-Maskhutah, expecting, of course, to find evidences of the ancient existence of one of the towns mentioned in the Bible as "treasure-cities" built by Pharaoh, namely, Raamses, as the traditional name suggested, and as the world supposed.

Naturally, the first work undertaken by Monsieur Naville was a special examination of those monuments already unearthed and still standing in the open air at Ismailiya. He appears to have possessed singular skill in reading those characters which the ancient Egyptians used for their alphabet; and the earliest thing he noticed was that all the stones were dedicated to the god Tum. On

both sides of the tablet, in particular, he was represented; once with a human head, having the diadem of Upper and Lower Egypt, and once with a hawk's head, surmounted by a solar disk. We must remember that, up to periods quite late in the history of hieroglyphics, a painful degree of uncertainty hung over an interpretation of the names and the figures which were found. No less a commentator than Kalisch, quoting no less an authority than Champollion, says that the original name of Pithom was Thoum,—a word meaning inclosed, or surrounded with mountains,—and that the prefix Pi was no more than the Egyptian article; so Pithom signified The Inclosed Place, or The Surrounded Town. Hence, he claimed that it was once fortified, and very likely was located away over the map, just south of Bubastis.

Now Monsieur Naville knew how unsafe all such reasoning must be, in face of the plain fact that these stones all bore testimony to the supremacy of the god Tum as the guardian deity of the city, whatever the name of the site should prove to be. Moreover, when Rameses II. received any mention, it was in connection with Tum or Harmachis as their equal in association and worship. So he concluded that Pithom was simply Pi Tum, or the abode of Tum; and he made the ingenious conjecture at once that, when these ruins should be satisfactorily uncovered, the site of the treasure-city Pithom would be found, and not Raamses. It needs to be said just here that the name did

not appear upon those objects out in the square at Ismailiya, but was afterward brought to light upon a statue of a priest, and read plainly as the name of the city, Pi Tum.

The Supreme Being in the intricate religious system of Egypt was named Ptah. He made the egg from which the sun and moon came forth in the beginning; he was the father of all the other deities, whose birth was from his eye, and of all men, whose birth was from his mouth. But next to Ptah came Ra. He was chief god of Heliopolis in Goshen, or that tract of country where the Hebrews lived when they had to make an unjust tally of bricks without straw. The name Heliopolis means "City of the Sun." Really, Ra was the sun, for his mother was named Nut (that is, the sky, across which he sailed in a boat); his whole life was passed in waging ceaseless war against the demon of darkness called Apap. In the morning the sun was named Harmachis, at midday he became Ra, and at evening he was Tum; and so those Egyptians declared that Ra died every night, but created himself anew every morning at dawn. The slabs and statues found show that this particular deity was recognized as the special god of the city, and so it took his name, Pi Tum.

The next year, 1884, the whole site was explored as far as would be necessary, and the results have been given to the public in a valuable and interesting volume. The details of discovery would hardly awake enthusiasm in a popular address

like this; only the results of an identification of so important a site need to be rehearsed just now.

It is easy to condense the narrative of Monsieur Naville, but it is better to give the words of Mr. George Rawlinson, and so add the helpful indorsement of this well-known Egyptologist to the facts as stated. "The town is altogether a square, inclosed by a brick wall twenty-two feet thick, and measuring six hundred and fifty feet along each side. Nearly the whole of this space is occupied by solidly built square chambers, divided one from the other by brick walls, from eight to ten feet thick, which are unpierced by window or door, or opening of any kind. About ten feet from the bottom the walls show a row of recesses for beams, in some of which decayed wood still remains, indicating that the buildings were two-storied, having a lower room, which could only be entered by means of a trap-door, used probably as a store-house or magazine, and an upper one, in which the keeper of the store may have had his abode. Thus far the discovery is simply that of a 'store-city,' built partly by Rameses II.; but it further appears, from several short inscriptions, that the name of the city was Pa-Tum, or Pithom; and there is thus no reasonable doubt that one of the two cities built by the Israelites has been laid bare, and answers completely to the description given of it."

It is further important to notice, as it is exceedingly interesting to learn, that almost the whole of the city was disclosed to have been built of brick.

In connection with the manufacture of brick, the inspired narrative mentions mortar; and these ruins show that the several courses were usually "laid with mortar in regular tiers." Then a deeper interest still is awaked by the announcement of the fact that a part of the work was done with bricks having straw in them, and a part with those of an inferior quality in some instances destitute of it.

We may as well come back directly now to the passage in the book of Exodus, which was offered as the introductory text of this lecture: "And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them. Now there rose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we. Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land. Therefore they did set over them task-masters, to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure-cities, Pithom and Raamses."

Several questions arise here which will fitly occupy our careful study; and it happens, fortunately, that many admirable illustrations in explanation and proof are furnished in the story we have before us.

One of them is this: Which of the Pharaohs was it for whom these two towns were builded? Who was it that planned the ingenious and malicious kind of murder, by which the strength and life of these people were worn out with terrible affliction in the brick-yards? Most likely, it was Seti I., the father of that princess by whose womanliness Moses was saved from drowning. Rameses II., his son whom he associated with him in the kingdom, continued the same cruel policy, and shared in the profitable guilt by which his show of power was increased. The two in common were responsible for this wickedness. It is not easy to decide whether the pronoun "they" refers to the monarchs in joint possession, or whether it is just the royal plural, or whether "his people" are to be considered as having a part in the appointment of the task-masters. The record says, "they did set over them" these infamous creatures for the purpose of "afflicting them with their burdens." Seti began it, as we understand; both persisted in it while they ruled jointly; and Rameses kept it up, and even added to it some worse ingenuities of his own when the sole responsibility fell into his hands. The main sculptures found in Pithom show, however, that Rameses II. had prominence there.

A second question is of equal interest: Where is the other city, mentioned in this verse, Raamses, as the name is spelled in the English version? As yet this town has not been positively identi-

fied; no special search has been made for it, for the ruins now admitted to be those of Pithom were until very lately supposed to be those of Raamses. In the book he has published Monsieur Naville says with decision: "It is useless now to discuss the site of the city of Raamses, which will only be ascertained by further excavations." Perhaps it is as well to quote the remark made in one of the modern commentaries, which it might be difficult to indorse or even accept, but which will certainly serve as some sort of reason for introducing just here the account of Rameses I. as the founder of his famous dynasty. The remark is, that this treasure-city Raamses was started by Seti I., and was named after his father.

Of Rameses I., the presumption is, his reign was short, his history inconspicuous. The monuments of him are very scant; his tomb was found long ago buried under rubbish, and the stone sarcophagus was not sculptured, but only painted; indeed, it was not brought with the mummy when it was finally removed to Deir-el-Bahari, where it was discovered with the rest in this last great find of the Pharaohs; it remains yet in the old sepulcher near Thebes called the "Gates of the Kings," where it was formerly seen by Belzoni when he earliest opened the cemeteries of the Upper Nile. The body of Rameses I. appears now in that strange group at the Bûlak Museum in a plain case, the colors of gaudy inscriptions in yellow, green, and blue paint looking thin and dull among

so many others richly gilded and shining with costly show. Very little is recorded of him; he appears like a mere fill-gap, his story is so meager. But Josephus seems to have found authority somewhere for a statement that he was on the throne no more than five and a half years of exceedingly tame purport; his fame consists in having been the progenitor of greater people than he was himself. That he belonged sovereignly at the head of his dynasty is evident from the representations of his solemn coronation, which are still conspicuous upon the entrance at the gate of the temple in Karnak. This man comes into our historic notice now only on the supposition that Raamses was named after him.

So there arises another question: What was a "treasure-city," as we find it called here in the text? There has always been some confusion about that word; the New Revision has changed it to "store-city." The same is rendered in the Book of the Kings "cities of store." That means, of course, towns for magazines and depots, places for storing a quantity of food or arms or treasures. Dr. Brugsch suggests the religious name of "temple-cities" also. But Monsieur Naville, in the story of his work at Pithom, has no doubt whatsoever as to the city he has excavated. He describes particularly certain large hollows built up round about with walls; and he declares that these were designed for no other purpose than that of granaries, into which the Pharaohs gathered

the provisions necessary for armies about to cross the desert, or even for caravans and travelers which were on the road to Syria. He adds likewise that they may have been used for warehouses in the trade with Africa by the Ptolemies. He also once calls Pithom a "border-fort" surrounded for safety by strong defenses, part of the masonry of which is still visible. These chambers had no communications with each other; the access to them was only from the top. If they were ever filled with corn, it would have to be thrown down from above and drawn up afterward in the same way. It needs to be said further that some of the Egyptologists, notably among them Dr. Lansing, of the American Mission at Cairo, claim that these apartments, which look so like depositories, are really only foundations hollowed out, upon the top of which houses might be upraised so as to be out of reach of the annual inundations. Then palaces could be planted there on that low plain; and residence-cities may perhaps be a better name for Pithom and Raamses than "treasure-cities" or "store-cities" either. They may have served both purposes, and had royal abodes in them as well as granaries and marts, and been used for depots and arsenals, and even for "fortified cities," as the Septuagint version renders the words. There have been found there arrow-heads and nails, rings and chisels, made out of bronze; horses' bits and dagger-knives, ax-heads and plowshares and scale-armor, fashioned of iron. And there has

been no end of the golden ornaments, terra cottas, linked chains, ear-rings and gems, to show that wealthy buyers dwelt there, with prosperous merchants able to keep stock for the luxurious class.

Only one more question remains: What is the worth of such a discovery as this? Why is so much applause given to this explorer for an almost accidental discovery of a little town like Pithom? Because the main attack in these times has been upon the integrity of the books of Moses; and the special point menaced is the account of the Exodus; and the trouble about the departure of the Israelites has been mainly centered in the want of knowledge concerning the route they took when they went out of Egypt; and the reason why this was always a vexation was a forced hard fact that scholars did not know the spot they started from in that terrible midnight. The record reads: "And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children." But now where was Rameses? Where was Succoth? Just here comes the information that Pithom is found, and that was the mate of Rameses, and Rameses must be close by somewhere; and, moreover, we learn from the monuments that Succoth was the civil name of Pithom, as Pi Tum was its priestly or religious name. Thus we have the actual point of the start: those two millions of people (the marching men, as here numbered, with the proper proportion of women, children, and servants) came

up from all over Goshen; some from Zoan, some from Rameses, close by, some from Pithom town itself, all gathering at Succoth, from which they pushed forward in the night, long to be remembered, toward a wilderness journey through the Red Sea and the Jordan into Canaan.

Thus everything illustrates God's word, and nothing is permitted to darken it; only God must be suffered to choose his own time. Plain upon the sands of the Delta have these stones been lying for centuries of unrecognized exposure; now they have been found when they were most necessary. Who would have seen this to be a part of the grand project which ultimately found its realization in the Suez Canal? Human ambition and commercial needs were coming forward to witness to Christ.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

VIII

GOSHEN AND THE OBELISK OF ON.

And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly.—Genesis xlvii. 27.

AMONG the mummies found at Deir-el-Bahari was one that attracted more than usual attention because of a general appearance of dilapidation and mutilation, and because it seemed to be unmistakably the representative remains of one of the greatest men in Egyptian history. A certainty of conclusion on this point could not be reached without unrolling the body and examining the bands; for the outer wrappings, so helpful in other cases, had been disturbed in this by the hand of some ancient desecrater of the grave. The very coffin was badly shattered, and only enough of the inscriptions were left to make it clear that in it had once been deposited the body of Thotmes III., one of the royalest of all the early kings of Egypt. Miniature representations of the gods and a few of the Pharaonic titles still remain intact. Moreover, the mummy itself had been rudely broken into three pieces, and a careful examination of the exterior condition

made it evident that the safest thing to do was to remove the cerements of death at once.

On opening the first inclosure, a rent in the grave-clothes near the left breast showed that the tomb-pillagers had been searching with keen instinct of robbery within the shrouds for plunder of chains, amulets, and jewels on the corpse itself. All around the inside of this wooden case were found wreaths of flowers, larkspurs, acacias, and lotuses. It is said that they looked as if they had been recently dried in the sun, and even the colors of the petals could be discerned. Now we are to remember that this king died thirty-six hundred years ago.

The stature of this man was disappointing; for his story had already suggested to the world, as such things often do, that he who did large deeds must be a large man. But greatness is not always bigness, and Thotmes III. was only five feet two inches in length as he now lay there in his spices. The directors of the Museum proceeded with their examination, and easily established by the bandages that this was veritably all that remained of the man who conquered Syria in arms, overran Ethiopia, and absorbed Cyprus. History tells us, that, under this monarch's reign, Egypt was at the highest pinnacle of power, so that a nation so feared might place its frontiers where it pleased. Think of that for a moment, while you are informed that alongside of him in the coffin was found likewise a poor little wasp,

attracted by the flowers, possibly, and closed in at that instant; and this pitiable insect, having no embalmment and no friends, was in better preservation than that great man's body, which in an hour more would be gone back into dust.

For this was the result of the examination. While human eyes in wondering interest and grave thoughtfulness were gazing upon the countenance which used to awe thousands and command armies, the frame evidently began to crumble; and there was just time enough left to photograph the features; then they dropped away into ashes, piece by piece. The whole remains had to be hurried off out of sight into burial.

What renders this particular king of interest to us now is found in the fact that he was the obelisk-maker, whose shafts of granite are lifting their tall heads toward the sky in many of the chief cities of the world. Four of the largest are known to have been erected by this king; one is now in London, one in Rome, one in Constantinople, one in New-York. All of these were once grouped close together in Heliopolis, in the Land of Goshen, where the children of Israel had their home during their harsh bondage to Pharaoh. One obelisk still stands there on the plain in lonely solitude; that one was erected by Usertesen I., and is the oldest of all now known, the venerable "father of obelisks."

The ancient Egyptian people were exceedingly religious in spirit and in practice. They wor-

shiped the sun. Their idols were personifications of the sun. Ptah represented the beams of the sun as bringing life to all things; so they named him the Creator, or the creative energy or principle. Harmachis was the rising sun, coming with light of dawn unto mankind. Ra was the midday sun, when he shone in his awful strength over the hot sands. Tum, or Atum, was the setting sun. Osiris was reckoned with such gods as the sun after it had sunk below the horizon. Now, at Heliopolis there was a mighty temple for the worship of the sun; the very word Heliopolis means "City of the Sun." And at the gate or entrance of the edifice, out in the open air, these great columns of granite were set up on end, pointing straight up toward that god of day they were designed to adore; that is to say, they were intended to express the worship of the souls that consecrated them. The inscriptions they bear are of the nature of dedications, signed by the persons who erected them. The ovals or cartouches are the names of adoring monarchs who offered them to the deity in token of devotion.

When, therefore, we gaze upon this tremendous pillar of stone in the Central Park, we are to understand that it is an Egyptian psalm of praise. It is a piece of perpetual worship in permanent granite, carried across two oceans and planted in a strange land among Christians, but still pointing upward calmly as it was bidden almost four thousand years ago. Thotmes has been dead for

centuries, but he did not vanish into dust till European hands just lately took away his shrouds. Some say the obelisk received its fashion as a representative of a sunbeam. If so, it is but a ray of the Sun-god's light sent back as a prayer.

It is not yet decided just what limits must be set or what fixed outlines must be drawn so as to mark on a modern map the region exactly representing Goshen as it must have been when, at Joseph's request, Pharaoh assigned it as the permanent abiding-place of his father, with those families and attendants of his brothers that the old man brought down into Africa. It was a region quite extensive, lying along the famous river of Egypt, on the east side of what is now called the Delta. Information is coming in slowly but surely; and it will not be long at the farthest before the facts will be established. We know that Raamses was in it, and Pithom and On; and On is just Heliopolis, and that is where the obelisk once stood. This is enough for our need tonight, and you shall have an account of the visit I made in person.

The site of Heliopolis is about five miles from modern Cairo, on the eastern side toward the desert. Our party took from the hotel an ordinary European carriage with a span of horses, much like one of our livery-hacks here at home, and started on the errand in the cool of an exquisite morning. There was nothing precisely oriental in this; most of us, however, were heartily

tired of the monotonous jog of the small donkeys, and lame from climbing the pyramids of Ghizeh. Indeed, those cities which lie along the overland route to India have become already so modernized that one does not recognize them as particularly Eastern now; most comforts can be procured in Asia as well as in Europe.

In Genesis there is a verse of which this excursion is an illustration; it helps us to fix a date, and settle the locality of a town:

"And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt."

This wife Asenath was the mother of the two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, of whose descendants we hear so much in the subsequent tribual annals. "On" was the name given to a distinguished city, then at the height of its opulent and intellectual influence, in the land of Goshen; the exact limits of it are not quite accurately measured yet, but the situation is authentically marked by the ruins of the modern Matariyeh, the suburb at least of the old temple town of Heliopolis, half a mile away. This same name On occurs several times in the Bible. Ezekiel calls it "Aven," and Jeremiah calls it "Beth-shemesh": this last name is only a transcription into Hebrew, having the same signification as Heliopolis in Greek, "City of the Sun." This refers either to the ancient splendor of the place, or, perhaps, to the esoteric

form of worship employed in the heathen rites celebrated by the priesthood there long ago.

There is reason to believe that in immediate connection with this temple was a flourishing institution of a scientific character, a university with all the appliances for study and research. In these precincts Herodotus composed a portion of his history. It is asserted that a heathen astronomer observed and recorded, in this extensive center of learning, a most remarkable three-hours' darkness, which could have been none other than that which fell upon the humbled earth when Christ was in the agony of crucifixion. Plato has been put into history as having passed one period of his life amidst these scholastic scenes in pursuit of philosophy. When Cambyses invaded Egypt, the city was destroyed; and at the time of Strabo's visit, eighteen hundred years ago, he found only a mass of ruins to mark the spot.

We set off in high spirits for our trip to this interesting locality. In this immediate region, all along the way from Cairo, the land is highly cultivated. Access to water is comparatively easy, and many are the rude and in no wise ingenious expedients to which the husbandmen resort in order to irrigate the fields. I remember that when I visited this place first, there were fine harvests just waiting for the gatherers on either side of the slight road we followed. Acacia trees, feathery palms, light tamarisks, and stiff gnarled

sycamores vied with the verdure in making our ride welcome. Two little children rode with us then; and they kept disputing in generous and playful rivalry, each looking on a different scene from the opposite doors of the carriage, as to "whose side" was the prettier. And as often as I was called by their lively voices in pleasant enthusiasm to become umpire in their sweet contention, I had now to admit that some richly watered garden certainly carried the day, and then to confess that the golden glow of a luxuriant wheat-field reminded me most of our American home.

This time we came earlier, and yet the beauty was none the less. The grain was still green, and had not so much as begun to set toward the harvest. The young leaves were budding on the branches; the plains were like a rich carpet; the flowers were in their liveliest and newest spring bloom.

At last we reached the spot; indeed, there could be no chance of mistaking it, for up in the clear air points the calm sharp apex of that tall shaft of granite which remains sole monarch of the plain. A winding footpath led us through a wheat-field quite up to the base of this wonderful old mass of stone, a monolith of red granite, concerning which, with all its mystery, we know thus much at least — that it was erected on that identical ground more than a hundred years before Joseph was born, and that by its side, perhaps

with his very garments sweeping the edges of stone, Poti-pherah passed in the daily pageants of priesthood. Our eyes see now what the maiden Asenath beheld on the morning when she became a bride.

It seemed incredible, but it was certainly true, that our feet were standing upon the same soil which Moses trod for many a day in his care for the willful people he was chosen to lead. The barbs of grain rustled against each other there around the ancient pillar, and black eyes of Egyptian children were shining out from among them, as enviously they watched the travelers from over two seas. The mind becomes bewildered in the midst of this confusion of the past and present.

Think of a wheat-field, a thing of passing seasons, sowed, as it were, yesterday and to be harvested to-morrow; in the center of it a tall column, high as a steeple and covered with mysterious hieroglyphics; close by it these swarthy faces, and on beyond it, near twenty miles away, yet perfectly distinct, the gray steps up the pyramids.

Some mounds lie here and there in the neighborhood; occasionally in the past few years a slab or a sphinx has been unearthed in the plowed field; perhaps they are the remnants of walls or palaces. But gone is every semblance of size, shape, or position. I took in my hands a chip of the granite, which some hammer of adventure had struck away and left loose in the corner; and with

this we gathered some of the spring flowers which bloomed by the side of the path: how venerable seemed the one, how evanescent seemed the other! What temerity there appeared to be in the nests of the wasps builded along up the unresisting sides of the obelisk: how could the insects dare to fasten their paper homes on the cartouch of a dead Pharaoh!

We were unusually loath to leave this land of Goshen. We continued to linger, our imaginations fully aroused, amid scenes so emphatically real in this world of shams. This is the only obelisk I ever saw that still stands where it belongs. It was one of a solemn pair erected at the entrance of this historic temple. Between the two passed every ministrant or devotee who went in. The second is at Rome; stands in front of St. John Lateran Church. The pedestal of a third barely crops up out of the ground not far from this one; the shaft of stone, however, is a lost treasure; it may be buried there at the spot among the sands. In the same vicinity were others, erected by different men. Two of these were taken to Alexandria; one or two more to Rome. That which stands in front of St. Peter's Cathedral was made by Menephtah, the Pharaoh of the Ten Plagues and the Red Sea. Those moved to Alexandria somehow got the name of "Cleopatra's Needles"; but Cleopatra had nothing to do with them. Lately, they have been borne away, one to the English, one here to us. Thus even the obelisks

have left this venerable old giant companionless. The famous institution, where perhaps Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, has vanished to its last ruin. Nothing, absolutely nothing, is found there at Heliopolis now but this one grand pillar of prayer, seeking the sun precisely as if those mistaken heathen who planted it were waiting for answers at its foot.

So we lingered dreaming under its straight, stiff shadow. Beautiful tamarisk trees waved in the freshening wind. The awkward branches of the sycamore-figs ungracefully bent to the stir of the air which swung the neighboring palms, like the indolent sweeping of plumes against the sky. The gurgling of water-rills came softly to my ear, as they trickled from the Spring of the Sun near by in the orchards of Matariyeh, with its traditional memories of Joseph and Mary and Jesus.

And yet we all sighed in the presence of this indescribable romance of beauty. For our thoughts were far away among the annals of an inspired history, dearer than anything else just now. There is a wonderful impressiveness in an undoubted authenticity. We were conscious that for once we were upon Bible ground. We were standing where those children of Israel labored and endured while in their bondage. The open sky over us was what covered them; the sights we were looking upon were what they saw for many a dark morning when in despair they wished God it was evening, and for many a lonely evening when in

hopelessness they wished God it was morning again. It was true of them then, as it always has been with poor people since, that as for the mighty man, he had the earth, and the honorable man dwelt in it; and the world is now so full of mighty men, not to mention the honorable ones, that between them the space for working people seems amazingly used up in division. It must be the sense of this, of the unchangeable nature of oppression in all ages of the world, that keeps the fellaheen of that sad land in the habit of crooning to themselves when about their tasks one pitiful little doggerel, which has been rendered by a gifted hand into poetry:

Work, my brother, rest is nigh;
Pharaoh lives forever!
Beast and bird of earth and sky,
Things that creep and things that fly,
All must labor, all must die;
But Pharaoh lives forever!

Work, my brother, while 't is day;
Pharaoh lives forever!
Rivers waste and wane away,
Marble crumbles down like clay,
Nations dwindle to decay;
But Pharaoh lives forever!

Work! it is the mortal doom;
Pharaoh lives forever!
Shadows passing through the gloom,
Age to age gives place and room,
Kings go down into the tomb;
But Pharaoh lives forever!

Silently we turned away, leaving the venerable granite still upon its errand of prayer and praise, standing, like a stone Casabianca, "whence all around have fled," out in the midst of absolute desolation still pointing aloft, there on the borders of "that great and terrible wilderness," its edges sharply cut, its pinnacle unblunted, its hieroglyphics as fresh as if traced only yesterday, for all that four thousand years have summered and wintered upon it. It is an old monument; but the quarry at Syene it came from is older, and the rolling orb men live upon is older still. How pitiful are all the works of men at the best! It is admitted that this is "the father of obelisks": it may be possibly the oldest monument on the earth. It was erected by Usertesen I., a Pharaoh of the Twelfth Dynasty. It competes in age with even the pyramids: it was lifted on its pedestal before Abram was born. It is two hundred and fifty years older than ours here in Central Park.

We grow silent and thoughtful as we think of it, tranquil in the starlight there to-night all alone among the graves around its base; a patriarch tomb-stone above the dust of a hundred generations of buried men, nameless, forgotten. It seems as if it might stand till doomsday shall come with its terrors. Will there be any Goshen, will there yet be any obelisks, will there be any old earth, forty centuries from to-day? Even now the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth

together in pain, sighing for redemption, as Israel sighed for the coming of God.

But the theme makes us melancholy; is there no relief to its inexpressible sadness? Certainly: and, singularly enough, we discover a sufficient antidote right here among the traditions of the spot. Most of us will remember that in our youth we were told the tale of a fabulous bird called the phenix. We find in the dictionary not much aid when we seek to understand how this singular bird — represented as dying in fire, with its wings outstretched — comes to be put on even the street signs; all it says is this: "A bird fabled to exist single, and to rise again from its own ashes, and hence used as a symbol of immortality." But now let us hear the true story,— that is, the true story of the fable. The civil name of this town in Goshen was An, easily by the Hebrews changed into On; the sacred name of it was Pe Ra — meaning "the Abode of the Sun." To this great religious university once every five hundred years was wont to come an Arabian bird, of large form and beautiful plumage. It would build its nest among spices, out of twigs and straws of strongest perfumes and driest texture; and then, even as the bystanders watched it, it would start mysterious flames around it, kindling the sky with the burning of itself in its own habitation, and perishing utterly into ashes. But then, directly out of the same heap of cinders there would arise a new phenix, spreading his

red and gold wings as he flew slowly away across the desert toward the unknown land from which the other, his parent bird, came. This is the tale that in those early ages the priests at Heliopolis used to tell their devotees as one of the wonders of their temple. What they intended by the parable or allegory we are not able to say. Many think that this was the way in which they taught the dim notions they had of the deathless existence of the soul on the other side of the grave. It died down into dust, but then out of the ashes came the new existence never to end.

It is the other life which is the relief to the apparent failure of this; there are two phenixes, not just one only; when you mourn over the dying one, screaming in the flames, wait a moment; the new one is coming up out of the ashes; that is the one to keep thinking about.

Then, besides all this, remember that the obelisk was a mistake. We must point our prayer up to something better than the sun. Classic scholars tell us that the old Greeks called a good man, that is, a religious man, "a man of business." It is not business-like to offer an immortal soul unto a deity of the neuter gender, even if it seems the sunshine itself. Ralph Waldo Emerson, so his biographer says, was interviewed once a little closely: "Do you believe in God?" the question was put to him; and the philosopher replied, very gravely and reverently, "When I speak of God, I prefer to say It—it." That was what the obe-

lisk-people used to say; some of us supposed we had made an improvement on that since we received the New Testament. God came down to us in the person of his Son Jesus Christ; we pray to him; we bend our regenerated wills to his; we try to be like him. And he it was who came to bring life and immortality to light. "Every kindness done to others in our daily walk," so wrote Dean Stanley for his students,— "every attempt to make others happy, every prejudice overcome, every truth more clearly perceived, every difficulty subdued, every sin left behind, every temptation trampled under foot, every step forward in the cause of good, is a step nearer to the life of Christ, through whom alone death can be really a gain to us." *Via crucis, via lucis!*

IX

WHERE WAS THE "FIELD OF ZOAN"?

Marvelous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.—Psalm lxxviii. 12.

WE are now coming directly to the recital of what the theocratic King of Israel did in the process of setting the Hebrews free. In the words quoted from a familiar psalm, sung in the temple-worship for unreckoned ages subsequently, we are told that he did "marvelous things" in the sight of the fathers before a path was found out of the land of Egypt. What these were is in due season to come under our study. But just now we should like to know where this contest exactly occurred as it is detailed in the sacred story. There has never, until lately, an answer been given to this question. Where was Pharaoh when Moses and Aaron entered his presence and made their stern demand? Nothing hardly beyond scholarly conjecture could be suggested until W. M. Flinders Petrie, under the patronage of the Egypt Exploration Fund, spent an eventful night, tedious, bitter cold, in an eleven-hours' passage along the canal in a Menzaleh row-boat, reaching Tanis in February, 1884.

"Tanis?" Certainly: Tanis is Zoan. It takes no time, it wastes no words, to make that clear. The text we have employed to-night is a simple guide in this matter. It says: "Marvelous things did he in the field of Zoan." Seven centuries after that psalm was composed, a famous translation was made of the Old Testament by the Septuagint scholars who best understood it. They were Jews, they did their work in the very center of intelligence in Egypt itself, they knew the traditions, they were familiar with the locality; and when they rendered this sentence into Greek they wrote: "Marvelous things did he in the field of Tanis." That was to say, as plainly as language could, Zoan is Tanis.

In general terms, Tanis may be described as located twenty miles, or somewhat more, north of the village rendered historic by the battle of Tell-el-Kebir, fought but a few years ago between the British forces and the insurrectionary army of Arabi. The vast heaps of ruins which mark the spot lie about midway between the eastern branch of the Nile and the straight line of the Suez Canal, reaching to the very shore of Lake Menzaleh. It is a forlorn district. There are no roads, no conveyances, no hotels, no shade-trees, no sources of food or forage; not an assistance or an invitation ever comes from that neighborhood for a tourist or a scholar to go forth on a venture of exploration. For the last forty miles of the journey, there are perilous heats by day, malarial fogs and cold dews

that cut to the bone in the night, insects of hideous persistency, and now and then a prowling Arab, seeking whom he may devour. That whole Menzaleh tract is pestiferously full of swamp-landscapes, mud-hills, and quicksands. It is often half water, and in spots dangerous with reeds and treacherous marshes. While the summers are hot and blazing, the land is dry; the salt lies over it, incrusted and white, and the eyes ache with the silvery glitter of the crystals.

Few inhabitants with many dogs keep up a semblance of life somewhere in the vicinity, coming into conspicuousness noisily when any of their victims appear. Mostly fishermen, so the aborigines seem to be; those who know say that the type is peculiar in face and figure; often an individual is met who would make you suppose he must have descended from the remote foreign ancestry, and been a representative of the dynastic rule of the Shepherd Kings in the days before Joseph's history. Close beside this ancient town, only across the border, Israel brought in his sons and their households; and so this new race of Hebrews came to mingle their blood somewhat with the old Hyksos community that held the land; and these strange inhabitants, sparsely keeping the Menzaleh region alive, may owe some characteristics to the changes of the time. It is known that there was an intense prejudice against the Israelites in the minds and hearts of the Egyptians because of their lowly tastes and

rural occupation. But after Joseph was received into the families of the nobles, and married a wife among those highest in the land, the daughter of a priest, amalgamation would not be difficult or unusual.

They are certainly different from the true Egyptians. In one of the tombs up the Nile, at Beni-Hassan, there is on the wall a painting which shows the coming of a Semitic family, apparently about to settle down in the country. This picture is very old; it belongs to the time of the Twelfth Dynasty; it represents men and women very unlike the Egyptians themselves; they are clad differently; they behave differently; one of them is playing upon the lyre as he walks along in the procession; asses are the beasts of burden, and upon their backs children are placed; though the garments are rich, the goods appear scanty; the women accompany the men; evidently these have come to stay. Just thus may Jacob have journeyed when he entered this land; Joseph's wagons in Zoan were near at hand to meet him, as he needed transportation into an adjacent home, almost touching the palace parks of his powerful son.

Desolate as that entire neighborhood is now, it is quite certain that it used to be almost fairy-like, and even luxurious in its strange beauty and fertility. It so happens that there has been brought to us in these later times a vivid picture of this palace-city, as it was in the days when Israel was

in bondage under Rameses II. An Egyptian poet details a visit he made, and he has no words to express the delight he experienced. It is easy to quote the free rendering of his stanzas into our own somewhat stiffer tongue. He says: "I came to this city of Rameses-mi-Amen. She is beautiful, beautiful! Nothing like her is to be found among the monuments of Thebes — the very secret of the pleasures of life. Her fields are verdant with excellent herbage, her bowers bloom with garlands. Her meadows are full of loveliness, daily abounding in production of food; her pools are prolific of fish, and in the ponds are ducks. Each garden is perfumed with the smell of honey. The cultivated land is steeped in moisture. Her granaries are full of wheat and barley heaped up as high as heaven; vegetables and reeds and herbs are growing in the parks. Flowers for nosegays are in the houses where is raised the fruit. Lemons, citrons of the two kinds, figs are in the orchards. Sweet wine is there that one may mix with honey. There is fish of various kinds, some caught from the Euphrates, others such as are presented to the greatest of conquerors. Her ships go and come every day, laden with new products for food. The joys have fixed their seat there; there is no word of want; the small there are as the great." This is the vision of the old times in the field of Zoan.

To unearth another city like Zoan is very like the unearthing of all the rest; but the results are

by no means the same. Suppose a series of libraries to be discovered in an ancient land; the process the scholars would pursue in every case would appear tediously similar, if they should put down in details what they did from day to day. But in one library there might be a thousand books that were not in any other among the rest; there would be infinite variety, therefore, in the grand results. So here: what Mr. Petrie did at Tanis was quite the same uninteresting drudgery of digging and trenching that Monsieur Naville while looking for the treasure-city had to do at Tell-el-Maskhutah. The laborious days were spent under a flaming sun in shoveling off the sands of the desert from the stones they concealed, hurrying into baskets on the shoulders of numberless gangs of children and youths the weeds and bits of bricks, and all the miscellaneous confusion which had gathered for hundreds of years above the town, and now lay over the streets and ruins of buildings in the form of huge and shapeless mounds. In a few weeks, however, it became apparent that there was a vastly larger city to uncover here than was ever builded on the site of Pithom, and of an inestimably more important character. This was a monumental town, and acres of valuable ruins were spread out under the soil. Unfortunately, vandal hands had long been there at work, treating the spot as a quarry for plunder of stones to be used in building their huts. So the opened mounds showed evidence of

having been excavated before, and many of the valuable slabs, that had been covered with inscriptions, hardly kept together enough to be deciphered. Mr. Petrie turned, cleaned and dated, copied and arranged, all the monuments; he surveyed the site by trigonometry, and drew three plans with a definite scale of measure to the inch; also he photographed everything of importance he found among the ruins. Sphinxes were discovered, a temple, many dwellings, and in them articles of domestic use innumerable. Rings and other ornaments, sickles and other tools, altars, statuary, bronzes, terra cottas, with wonderful variety and profusion were brought up from under the ground.

Here was history that could not be misunderstood nor doubted nor undervalued. Remember that not only what is on the stone in such circumstances, but the stone itself, is useful as a witness. We can know instantly exactly what quarry this came from; and the use of that very quarry, or the disuse of it, fixes a certain date and a certain political condition of the country at the period. Indeed, such ruins are a library to one who knows how to read them, and are priceless as helps.

It is not best to use our time in a mere lecture by constructing a catalogue of objects. Let me tell you the story of one of the mighty wonders of ancient statuary, which was formerly conspicuous on this spot, and fragments of which have just come to light. It was a colossal figure rep-

resenting Rameses II. When Zoan was in its glory, while it was the capital of the northern part of the empire, this stood upon its lofty pedestal in an extensive court-yard, near the grand palace of the king. From the pavement to the top of the double crown that, like all the images of the conceited monarch, it wore on its head, this wonderful statue measured one hundred and twenty feet in height. The attitude of the king was that of a man just walking, his left foot being advanced before the right. In one hand was the truncheon of office as king of Upper and Lower Egypt; in the other was held the massive staff of state. The face was serene and even noble in its expression, and a general grace of manly beauty pervaded the whole structure. For once, even the calm explorer who found this mass of fragments forsakes quiet measurements, and enters the sphere of enthusiasm as an artist; for he pronounces this colossus "the glory of the capital of the Delta."

Figures will perhaps suggest nothing, but it is worth while just to say that the statue was of red granite, a monolith, ninety modern feet high, finished so finely by the makers that every part of it, pedestal and all, shines like a piece of polished jewelry in the seal-ring of a prince. The great-toe was fourteen inches long, and the one next to it was twelve; the ear was five inches long from the curve at the top to the lobe at the bottom. The entire figure was cut from but a single stone,

weighing not less than six hundred tons, and this must have been brought from the quarries in Syene, eight hundred miles away.

Was this piece of work found in these late excavations? No, not intact, but large portions were found scattered in other structures in the city. Until Mr. Petrie made his surprising investigations, no man could ever have told what became of this wonder of the world. For the later kings sawed it up, and tore it to pieces, and then built it into gate-ways and walls all over the town. From the blocks, with the polish and inscriptions still upon them, he calculated these measurements, and easily reconstructed the immense monument for our imaginations to see.

The locality of this Scriptural town now established, it remains to give only a rapid glance at portions of its history, and then it is left for us to summon to our help the conception of the spot as it was when Moses and Aaron went in and out, during the terrible days of that contest which Menephtah waged with Jehovah. One small sentence is now to be read in the Bible concerning the story; but this only shifts all examination of dates. A poor unsatisfactory parenthesis relates (Num. xiii. 22) that "Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt." That settles nothing; for who knows the year when Hebron was first built?

It does not make any difference where we begin. It is clear, as far as these excavations can show, that Zoan was in existence as a city already

standing in the remote days of the Sixth Dynasty, when Memphis was just yielding to Thebes as the center of power, and also having the same place on the map under the Twelfth Dynasty, which is that in which Abram's history was wrought out. With the same definiteness as a fact, and nearly the same indefiniteness as a picture, we should be able to state that it continued as a town of some sort for all that mysterious period through which the Shepherd Kings held their sway. A mart for trade, a fortress for defense, a center for a colony, a capital for a palace, a shrine for a temple — all these it has been, apparently, through the ages of unannaled time. The most interesting of all these lately discovered monuments are those of the foreign kings whose conquering armies swept over the land and seized the entire realm.

No one is able to say who the "Hyksos" were. It is not certainly known what the name means. For five hundred years these people had sovereign possession of Egypt; no history preceded them, none remained behind. There is now and then a statue, and this always shows a fresh type of men. The faces are broad and flat; the cheek-bones are higher than those of the Egyptians, the lips are thicker, the jaws are wider, the mouth is full of a stern determination. They dress their hair and beards in a different way, widely, bushily; they throw over their lower limbs something like a kilt; they fling what looks like a leopard's skin over their shoulders. Sir J. William Dawson compares them

to the Chippewa Indians here in our country; and yet he thinks they were more likely Turanian or Mongol. At all events, they came and went in their own inexplicable way. We know that the native Egyptians gathered their patriot forces together in the Delta, and spent fierce years with varying fortunes in a war of deliverance, which they finally achieved. Some authorities declare this conflict raged without cessation for one hundred and fifty seasons. The hero who conquered and expelled those barbarians was named Sekenen-ra. He fought the last battle where they made their stand here in Zoan. The grateful people easily permitted a king of men like him to become the king of Egypt; he founded a new dynasty, and assumed the title of Ta-aken. This is the man whose romantic story is related in that famous "Abbott Papyrus," now in the British Museum. But the crowning fact of his career is disclosed in these later times; for his mummy was found with the rest at Deir-el-Bahari.

Of all the bodies discovered in that memorable sepulcher this is reckoned the oldest. It was inclosed in three wooden coffins, fitting in one another like a nest of boxes; and upon each of these was an inscription giving his name and insignia, drawn in red ink and afterward retouched with the brush. Besides this, the entire cases were covered with representations inside and outside, in splendid yellow and orange colors upon olive-green ground, taken from the Ritual of the Dead. It

was found necessary, for some reasons connected with the imperfections disclosed in the hasty process of embalmment, to unroll this body. Of the disclosures made by the examination Monsieur Maspero has published an interesting narrative, which shows that this veteran of many campaigns continued to be a soldier to the end of his life, and actually died on the field of battle. The account will be instructive to us just here.

"Two large winding-sheets of coarse texture and loosely fastened covered this mummy from head to foot. Next came pieces of linen carelessly swathed, and pledgets of rags held in place by narrow bandages. The outer covering having been removed, there remained under our hands a kind of spindle of stuff, measuring about six feet in length, and so slender that it seemed impossible there should be space enough inside of it for a human body. The two last thicknesses of linen being stuck together by spices and adhering closely to the skin, they had to be cut asunder with a knife, whereupon the entire body was exposed to view.

"The head was thrown back, and lying low to the left. A large wound running across the right temple, a little above the frontal ridge, was partly concealed by long and scanty locks of hair. The lips were wide open, and contracted into a circle, from which the front teeth, gums, and tongue protruded, the latter being held between the teeth and partly bitten through. The features, forcibly distorted, wore a very evident expression of acute

suffering. A more minute examination revealed the position of two more wounds. One, apparently inflicted by a mace or a hatchet, had cloven the left cheek and broken the lower jaw, the side teeth being laid bare. The other, hidden by the hair, had laid open the top of the head a little above the wound over the left brow. A downward hatchet-stroke had here split off an enormous splinter of skull, leaving a long cleft, through which some portion of the brain must have escaped.

"The position and appearance of the wounds make it possible to realize with considerable certainty all the circumstances of this last scene of the king's life. Struck first upon the jaw, Ta-aken fell to the ground. His foes then precipitated themselves upon him, and by the infliction of two more wounds dispatched him where he lay, one being a hatchet-stroke on the top of the head, and the other a lance or dagger wound just above the eye. We already know that Ta-aken fought against the Shepherds,— *i. e.*, the so-called 'Hyksos' invaders, who ruled Egypt for about five hundred years,— but till now we did not know that he died on the field. The Egyptians were evidently victorious in the struggle which took place over the corpse of their leader, or they would not have succeeded in rescuing it and in carrying it off the field. Being then and there hastily embalmed, it was conveyed to Thebes, where it received the rites of sepulture. These facts explain not only the startling aspect of the mummy, but the irregular fashion of its embalmment.

"Ta-aken was about forty years of age at the time of his death. He was tall, slender, and, to judge by what remains of the muscles of the shoulder and thorax, he must have been a singularly powerful man. His head was small, long, barrel-shaped, and covered with fine, black, curly hair, worn in long locks. The eye was large and deep-set, the nose straight and broad at the bridge, the cheek-bones were prominent, the jaw was massive, the mouth of middle size, somewhat projecting, and furnished with good sound teeth covered with fine enamel. The ears are gone, and there are scarcely any signs of beard or mustache. Ta-aken had been shaved on the very morning of the battle. Take him altogether, he must have been singularly like the Barabras (Nubians) of the present day, and have belonged to a race less mingled with foreign elements than that of the Rameses family."

The story of Tanis now becomes commonplace for our present need. The dynasties keep coming and going, like dreams of men and things, as the centuries move along. One king writes his name upon the monuments of those who went before him; another king tears down the whole of the previous pylons and obelisks and statues, and constructs others according to his own taste out of their fragments. By and by Rameses II. is on the ground, and there is no difficulty in recognizing him when this king appears. After him is Menephtah; and he has little notion of doing much for himself except covering other people's sphinxes

and statues and tablets with his inscriptions and cartouches as if he had paid for them. He takes the palace, wields the power, becomes the Pharaoh, has his headquarters and residence at Zoan. There Moses and Aaron are sent to him, and at God's command hold their meetings with him through the period of the plagues. And there in that city, just now uncovered by the spade of the explorer, God is giving us some lessons to learn.

One of them is concerning the battle-field upon which a soul has its final conflict with God. Zoan is a strange place for a tourist to visit in Egypt. He finds nothing but some acres of broken stones, and he will lose his journey unless he has eyes deeper than those of sense to see with. It would be better for him to close his eyes, and shut a world of life and action out of his vision. Let him think of what has given this desolate spot its fame. Perhaps he can reconstruct the pathetic old town, and seem to behold the palace, and in it the king upon his throne, and before him the two brothers — legates extraordinary from the kingdom of heaven. A mighty campaign is in progress, and the air is full of thunder of war. The armies are unseen; the prince of a great world of fallen angels is in the field; and confronting him is a celestial prince — the Lord of Hosts, with the Lord's hosts in array!

There, on that fragment of sand in the Delta of the Nile, an immortal soul decides its destiny. The mightiest power in the world has its crown

taken away, its pride humbled, its force crushed, before the invisible strength of Omnipotence. Now again, after thirty centuries, that old case is re-opened; and this field grows august and solemn with only a single question — a question almost as old as the spot itself: "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" — "Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?"

X

WONDERS IN THE FIELD OF ZOAN.

They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy: how he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan.

Psalm lxxviii. 42, 43.

MIRACLES are the true tokens of one's celestial commission. The present occasion seems fortunate for a discussion of this very subject without prejudice. We are suddenly confronted by an astonishing event which has set all the world talking about Moses and Pharaoh. These opened mummy-cases are attracting the eyes of the scholars of every nation. Evidently the commentaries of Christendom will have to be written anew, if it shall be shown that Menephtah was not drowned and the Israelites were actually four hundred and thirty years in Egypt. Then these ten plagues are as conspicuous as the ten commandments in the awakened minds of Sunday-school pupils; something must be said about an array of Christian evidences as notable as this. In the verses of the old psalm we have quoted as the text to-night, the one reproach leveled against the Hebrews themselves is, that they had ceased to remember the Lord's hand which had "wrought

his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan." Are we in like danger of forgetting them now?

What is the evidential value of miracles, of these miracles particularly, in their relation to the whole body of evangelical truth?

This is the question with which we now come to the story. These Old Testament chapters are familiar to us as household words. The exact picture that stands before our imagination just now is full of interest in its dramatic splendor, full of meaning, dignity, simplicity: "And Moses was fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh."

Look now at the scene as these two elderly men come into the imperial palace. They were beyond the days of mere enthusiasm and rashness of zeal. In this respect Menephtah had less to try his patience, possibly, than Nebuchadnezzar afterward when the boyish Daniel entered the audience-chamber to judgment. These rare old men were not here to trifle with him, nor would they needlessly humiliate him in the estimation of the court. They stood for a new God; now, if those deities in which he trusted could put them down in the line of miracles, there would be set before his present enterprise something worth the doing. In these modern times it has grown fashionable to depreciate the apologetic value of miracles as part of the Evidences of Christianity. Even the best friends of divine truth employ language sometimes

which is calculated to belittle these common credentials used in the Old and New Testaments alike. Fuller calls them the simple "swaddling-clothes of the infant churches." Even Trench says they are not "the garments of the full-grown." This may be quite true; it is likely that a careful discernment would discover in our Lord's behavior, as recorded in the Gospels, a fine impatience with these coarse-minded countrymen clamoring always for more signs, more wonders, more miracles, especially for such as gave bread and fish to eat and good wine at weddings.

The great thing to notice is that the Lord has chosen his methods for himself; and what he has invariably chosen is miracles for his seals of authentication. John Foster has compared such wonders to the ringing of the great bell of the universe to call men into church, and summon them to listen to the preacher from heaven. Now what he has to say will have to evidence its worthiness by its inherent character and consistency with other revelation from the same source. Three dispensations have been vouchsafed to men on the earth already, and we shall have no reason to expect more — the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel. Three persons once appeared upon the Mount of Transfiguration together in glorious garments, white and glistering — Moses, Elijah, and Christ. Each of these men had been led up into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan, and had come off victorious; each had fasted for forty days

and forty nights, and been strengthened by an angel at the last; each also had brought a dispensation of new truth to men from heaven—Moses, the Law; Elijah, the Prophets; Jesus Christ, the Gospel. These coincidences of life and purpose are very singular. But put beside them another: around each of them, and around no one else mentioned in the Bible anywhere, there is found a group of miracles. The cycles of time have been limited to about seventy years each. Elijah, Elisha, and followers of both, work miracles. Moses, and some after him, work miracles. Jesus, Simon Peter, Paul, and others after them all, work miracles. A blaze of brilliant wonders is seen for about threescore years and ten in each case; then everything ends without an announcement or a shock.

What does this mean? When the revelation was announced, which a gracious God in heaven was pleased to send unto men, and these leaders had set about their work of urging men to accept it and live by it, it became necessary for them to prove that their message really came from Jehovah. After they found a measurable establishment, the physical or mechanical signs ceased, and their place was taken by a series of metaphysical or spiritual evidences; that is to say, conversions of wicked men, the moment wicked men began to be converted; culture and consolation of believers, the moment believers began to be cultured or consoled. These were always the best evidences

of Christianity; better by far than healing the sick or raising the dead. Wonders of the coarser kind, therefore, disappeared; they were no longer necessary. And a very poor conception of the Gospel it is which would now wish that an age of mere cures of wounds, bruises, and fevers should come again to this world; we might as well hanker to go back to Moses and Elijah for some new signs, as to go back to Christ. "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Miracles have been likened to the frame-work, over which the arches of the temple of truth have been constructed: when the span is rounded and is complete so as to stand by itself, the needless props are removed. If any one sighs for their return, he wishes for what would be unsightly.

Dr. Johnson in his stately way once said to Boswell: "He who relates nothing exceeding the bounds of probability has the right to demand that they should believe him who cannot contradict him." This is sharp and clear; but we have to admit there is a sense in which it may not be forced. The man who tells me that he comes from heaven with a message which I must believe on pain of eternal death ought not to be overbearing or impertinently urgent. He has no right to demand that I shall accept him instantly, simply because I am not able instantly and adequately to give him contradiction. How can any of us prove a negative? No, we think we have a right

to challenge him with a demand to bring his proof forward first; proof is needed so strenuous and so cogent as to force our conviction and constrain our consent, when such a sanction as our everlasting life or death hangs upon the decision. It really seems as if this were the end for which miracles were designed.

The question, What is a miracle? seems a very simple one, but in most cases the answers will be found to be unseaworthy in debate. The majority of people in actual study of the Scriptures find it not easy to construct a satisfactory reply even for themselves. Frequently we can frame our definitions by searching out the etymological signification of the Biblical words; but here we are baffled, since there are several terms employed when miracles are mentioned, and the strict meaning of these cannot be said to be the same. The expressions found here in our text, "signs in Egypt" and "wonders in the field of Zoan," applied to the same sort of acts, refer to the effects produced on the persons who witnessed them; they bring in the idea of confirmations or impressions which their minds received. The word "signs" looks toward the purpose for which the miracles were wrought, and suggests a needed attestation, seals affixed to a message in order to authenticate or to verify it. The word "wonders" seems to designate the feeling that men would have as they witnessed what they could not understand. A wonder creates wonder; a sign signifies. So the

expression "mighty deeds" or "mighty works" looks toward the performer, the one who works the miracle, and introduces the notion of a superhuman energy or supernatural power. Hence there is really no single term in use by the sacred writers which by its plain meaning would furnish us with an accurate and sufficient description of the phenomenon to which it has been applied.

The definition presented by the school-men, and after them adopted generally by the commentators and the theologians, is this: a miracle is an event, contrary to the course of nature, and produced by the immediate power of God. It is not easy to give a better one than this.

But it has been objected to such a formula that it is too broad; it would include all the effects wrought upon the soul by the power of the Holy Ghost. Even Martin Luther used to speak of conversion as the "highest of all God's miracles." But it does not seem as if any careful student would need to become so bewildered as to confound miracles in nature with miracles of grace wrought upon the heart of a believer.

Our next inquiry, therefore, must be made concerning the purpose of all these wonders. In every instance that is one and the same; God permits the usual order of nature to be interrupted only for the lofty end of giving evidences of some new revelation of his will to men. It is enough to say that the remark of the historian Froude is quite bitter and uncalled for: "Miracles come when they

are needed; they do not come of fraud, but of an impassioned credulity that creates what it is determined to find." That is not exactly true; they come when God sends them. It is not the miracles that are in the Bible; it is the account of the miracles. The miracles were facts; then a few men out of the hundreds of witnesses were inspired to record and describe them, and the inspiration was another miracle. So the story of Moses' rod changed into a serpent, recorded in the Pentateuch by Moses, is a miracle indorsed by a miracle. Both were wrought as an evidence of God's truth and power.

In proof of this assertion, we need only group together the plain declarations of the Scriptures as to each of the three cycles which we have noted as remarkable in the history of the Old and New Testaments.

Begin with those wrought in the time of Jesus Christ, by himself and by his followers; what was the Saviour's purpose in disturbing the order of nature so abruptly? He turned water into wine; he fed multitudes with bread; he opened the eyes of the blind. For what did he do all this? To help poor people, and perform deeds of ordinary charity? It is best to consult the record at once, and observe the connection: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." "Teaching, preaching, healing," that is the order; the miracles follow the

proclamation of his messages to men. They were performed in order to authenticate his mission from heaven; that is what he himself says: "But I have greater witness than that of John, for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me."

Thus the strange wonders were understood by all who witnessed them: "There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." The miracles were not spoken of as evidences of the Lord's kindness or his skill or his generosity; they were verifications of his divine origin. They attracted attention, and commanded a reverent acquiescence in the truth of what he preached. We recognize the same purpose after the power to work them was given also to the apostles he commissioned. It was not for the sake of helping men bodily, but spiritually, that a gift so marvelous was bestowed upon them; they used miracles as seals. "And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right

hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." Hence the weighty argument and appeal of the apostle Paul pressed upon the consciences of his hearers; logic and life ought to move together. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"

Then, next, observe how explicit was the recognition of precisely the same thing in Elijah's miracles. Take that instance referred to once in the New Testament, the raising of the widow's son at Sarepta: "And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother, and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." It was not just in order to comfort that bereaved mother, but to bring evidence of his divine commission as a messenger of God's own truth.

This must be enough; now we return to our story, and we draw the easy conclusion concerning

the miracles wrought by Moses likewise; the purpose of them all was to produce on the Egyptians and on the Israelites and on all the world afterward along the ages the conviction beyond any other that the Lord Jehovah was the Lord of lords and the God of gods, as well as the King of kings, supreme, sovereign, and alone. "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, and my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them."

Let us seek to familiarize our minds with this thought. God did not work the miracles by his servants to cheer them up, or to increase their influence with the people; nothing is so suggestive as the fixed conduct of the miracle-workers in every case; they invariably check any enthusiasm toward themselves, and insist that all the glory of the splendid wonders they perform shall be given unreservedly to God.

Nor were the miracles of the Old Testament or of the New designed as rewards of the righteous or as retributions of the wicked. Some of them did have this result; that is to say, sometimes righteous persons were profited by them, and sometimes wicked persons were punished by them. But this

was incidental; it was not the first nor the leading end which they were intended to secure. That is to be looked for preëminently in the glory of God himself, and in the special direction of becoming an evidential confirmation of his word of revelation to men.

With this explanation, we can the better understand why the heavy reproach leveled against Israel, in the verse of the text, and in passages similar all through the history, was continued even for centuries after the events were antiquated, and, according to our modern notions of national growth, might well have been suffered to lapse out of memory. We think the freedmen of our times ought to begin, even now, with the vanishing of twenty years, to forget their bondage, feel kindly in thinking of their old masters, push on toward higher things, and never sing their old slave songs or tell their old slave stories to their intelligent children. But God blames the Israelites for their forgetfulness of these sad Egyptian experiences: "They remembered not how he wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan."

But when we understand that these miracles were the proofs of an everlasting covenant, evidences of God's truth in his communication of redemption to men, the very seals of an engagement into which his deity had been put as a pledge, the sanctions of a book which his providence was constructing for all the world and all the ages to read, then we begin to appreciate what is intended by

such adjurations. Let just one strophe of an old psalm be read over now with this for a refrain:

"He sent Moses his servant; and Aaron whom he had chosen. They shewed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham."

"He hath remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations!"

"He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word. He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish."

"He hath remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations!"

"Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings. He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, and lice in all their coasts."

"He hath remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations!"

"He gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land. He smote their vines also and their fig-trees; and brake the trees of their coasts."

"He hath remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations!"

"He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number, and did eat up all

the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground."

> "He hath remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations!"

"He smote also all the first-born in their land, the chief of all their strength. Egypt was glad when they departed; for the fear of them fell upon them."

> "He hath remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations!"

The practical force of all this discussion so far is this: it is God's revealed Word which is his particular care, and not the mere exhibition of his character. That is to say, the almighty Maker of this world has been pleased to commit himself to his own clear announcement of his ways, his attributes, and his purposes, in forms of human language, addressed to the minds and hearts of intelligent and accountable beings, rather than to the less conspicuous presentation of himself in providence and in the works of nature. So, some men construct an open attack upon the Bible as representing God in an unfavorable light; and some proceed even so far as to say that, if these stories they find in the Old Testament or in the New are thrust forward as facts, and really insisted upon as fair presentations of the Almighty, then they propose to fall back upon the instincts of nature

and the deductions of a cultivated reason, and reject the whole record; for certain legends of the Bible throw discredit upon the divine character, and the notion of deity they give is abhorrent — the Word flings shame on God's name.

To all this we reply simply: God has not placed himself upon his Name, but on his Word. We should like to call attention to what is in all likelihood the last psalm David ever wrote. He begins his singing exultantly, as if his whole heart were full of new gladness; and close upon his strain of highest gratitude, he gives the reason for such joy: "I will praise thee with my whole heart; before the gods will I sing praise unto thee. I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving-kindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." The meaning of this outburst is as simple as it is impressive: God has made great his "saying," above all the other manifestations of his deity. Our religion is, therefore, a book religion; positively and forever a book religion; it will stand or fall with this dear old Bible.

Hence, now, when we move forward into the wild turmoil that startled Zoan with its wonders, we are to recollect that, not for the sake of punishing this man Pharaoh, and not for the sake of showing his inexhaustible kindness to Israel, did God send these miracles,—not for the sake only or chiefly of these,—but for the sake of giving an irrefragable proof of his supremacy in the universe,

and an eternal confirmation of his spoken Word through the ages to come.

When the Nile rolls on sluggishly with its stream of awful blood; when the cattle moan under the murrain, and men blister with boils, as the swift rod of Moses sweeps anguish over the land; when the blast of the hurricane drives hail like morsels of ice on the defenseless heads of the Egyptians till none can stand before the cold; when the thunder roars through the sand-hills and shivers the palms with lightnings and tempests; when the darkness which might be felt settles slow and heavy like a pall of death in every dwelling; when the terrible outcry raised by man and beast tells the frightened little world down there in an asylum in Goshen that God is shaking Zoan with his arm of wrath; when, finally, the Red Sea, rushing up like a horse with its mane flying, is caught by its bridle, and thrown by Omnipotence back on itself stunned and broken, carrying with its reflux spearmen and chariots into horrible graves; then say to yourself gently: "He hath remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations!"

XI

"THE LORD GOD OF GODS."

Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord.—Exodus xii. 12.

WHEN, in Deuteronomy x. 17, Moses says, "The Lord your God is God of gods," and when, in Joshua xxii. 22, the people exclaim: "The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth,"— what do the words mean? Are there other "gods" than Jehovah? It is likely this inquiry will come up in the mind of almost any student of the Bible when he is reading the account of the ten plagues. The question is hard to discuss; but two considerations can be offered for help, and then we can reach the conclusion.

1. One is this: the entire record, unless a most elastic ingenuity of exposition be employed, seems to say that the contests delineated in the exciting chapters which record the deliverance from bondage and the establishment of Israel was between supernatural powers, rather than between ordinary human antagonists.

It was not just between Pharaoh and Moses, certainly. No evidence can be found that these two men were simply contending for influence and

sovereignty over the people down there in the brick-yards. The king had only to let loose his hand and sweep Moses and Aaron out of existence. Nor was it a jealous strife of races. Nowhere do the common people in the realm appear in it at all. For all we can see, they are rather peaceably and favorably inclined toward those suffering slaves; perhaps a little frightened at the last.

The fight of forces is in the palace. But the issue is positively stated to have been between God and the gods; that is, it was between the one true God of the Hebrews and the many deities worshiped by the Egyptians. On the one side was Jehovah, whom the two brothers reverently represented in the demands they were commissioned to make; on the other side were the heathen deities, whose champion Pharaoh assumed for himself to be. There were times when the king fairly recognized the existence and admitted the power of his brick-makers' God; only in the haughty pride of his hardened heart he declared he did not "know" him, and was not bound to obey him. He feared no crushing judgment from his hand, for he sincerely believed his nation had more potent helpers who would be his steadfast defense. There can be no doubt that Pharaoh put the most dauntless and implicit faith in the divinities his priests had for years taught him to worship; there was nothing strange in this.

We remember that the Syrians asserted that although Jehovah was the God of the hills, he was

not the God of the valleys, and so made capital fight on that issue (I. Kings xx. 28). Similarly the Philistines had confidence that their Dagon was supreme, and expected that Jehovah would in the end have to yield to him if they could only keep him set up for a while; and so bravely entered battle on that issue (I. Sam. v. 3–7). Thus in this case: Pharaoh accepted the gauntlet thrown down by Moses as a defiance to his gods, and with a courage worthy of a better cause took it up cheerfully in their name.

So the conflict proceeds. The nations stand silently and solemnly by while these tremendous antagonistic forces are employed in the royal abode, and are aroused only afterward when the pressure outside begins to be felt. The close of the narrative teaches us that they were perfectly intelligent from the beginning in the conceptions they had of what was going on. Pharaoh finally confesses openly the defeat of his gods when he says humbly to Moses, "Go then, serve Jehovah; and bless me also!" And with a like acknowledgment the Israelites ascribe all the glory of their deliverance to God. They do not behave as if they owed even a decent gratitude to Moses or Aaron. Here was a whole popular revolution without any sign of hero-worship. Never do we hear of any memorial places that they revisited, nor of any captains whose valor required a celebration, nor of any catch-words or motto-cries growing out of the troublous confusions. The entire ascription

begins, culminates, and ends in a single song of Miriam's: "Sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously." Even the dull Jethro exclaimed at the end: "Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods; for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them."

2. We must put with this consideration a second: these so-called "gods" of the Egyptians are spoken of constantly as if they were not mere dumb idols, nor even mere ideal creations of human imagination; the language could have hardly been stronger if it had meant to leave the impression that they were living existences — beings possessed of life and intelligence and will and some power.

Let us look at the facts as they meet us in the story. Moses and Aaron enter the royal palace and make their demand; Pharaoh instantly retorts with a demand for a miracle; down goes Aaron's rod on the floor, and at his bidding becomes a serpent,—some say a reptile more like a crocodile; then the king sends for his sorcerers, and they make crocodiles out of their rods also; and the courtiers seem just ready to glory over the two old men who were foolish enough to suppose that was a great thing to do in Egypt. All this is real, inspired history, for away over in the New Testament Paul tells Timothy what were the names of the magicians (II. Tim. iii. 8). "Jannes" and "Jambres" are simply "John" and "Ambrose," as we should call them. Now the gage

of battle is taken up, and Aaron's rod eats their rods, or Aaron's crocodile devours theirs, and the jugglers have to quit in a measure of ignominy. Then that interview closes abruptly.

These are the plain facts; something has to be done with them as a matter of interpretation, for the question arises, What does the story mean? What did these men do? Did they work miracles?

Some expositors are satisfied to say they wrought wonders at all events; and they did what they did by a greater knowledge of extreme intricacies of science. But even a child would think that a crocodile could not be really produced there to order by chemical or other scientific processes Moses was educated "in all the learning of the Egyptians"; why did not he use science, too? And in our times, why could not men use science to do the same sort of things?

Some say that these people wrought real miracles, and God, for his own purposes, suffered them briefly to wield his power. And this opinion is backed and illustrated by a reference to God's granting to Balaam, a confessedly wicked man, the spirit of prophecy, and to Judas, among the disciples, the same extraordinary gifts as the rest. But then these creatures must have been very much surprised, and perhaps frightened, at their own success. And really, it does appear unworthy of our conceptions of Jehovah that he should employ them in that singular way to humiliate their royal master. This was not the first occasion on

which this miracle was wrought; it was promised long ago to Moses, and was performed for his confirmation and instruction in Midian. It is not certain Judas had any power to work miracles; and Balaam at least was a witness to the truth, and not to a lie.

Some also say that these magicians did what they did as mere feats of legerdemain; they performed their usual tricks. But who imagines they could impose upon Moses, so that he should describe their actions here in the Pentateuch as if he believed they were supernatural? Such a contest between miracles and sleight-of-hand is quite inadequate to account for the terms of expression already quoted. How would this make out Jehovah to be "the God of gods"?

Some say that they wrought their wonders by the agency of evil spirits. They identify these deities, noted often in the older books of the Bible as the "gods" of the heathen, with the demons noted frequently in the time of our Lord. It is in the midst of a vigorous argument against idolatry that the apostle Paul adduces an Old Testament text, and follows it with an explanatory comment of extraordinary value to us just now in our study. Let us lay them by the side of each other, and get at their meaning.

Moses says: "They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods; they sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not; to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers

feared not." (See Deut. xxxii. 16, 17.) And now compare with it I. Corinthians x. 20: "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils." So the New Testament answers to the Old. And we may as well put alongside of these verses the rendering from the Septuagint of the famous passage in Psalm xcvi.: "For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods, for all the gods of the heathen are demons."

For some mysterious reason of his own, the sovereign Monarch of the universe has accepted an antagonism between the powers of evil and the powers of good in this world; and for nearly six thousand years Satan his creature has been waging battle openly amid the sublime agencies of nature with Jesus Christ his Son. Our minds would be clearer on this subject if our Bible were just a little more consistent in its renderings; one peculiarity of the sacred writers has not been consistently treated by the translators, not even in the New Revision. In the original Scriptures the name demon has never once been applied to the prince of the powers of the air, nor has the name devil been applied to any being except him. We are accustomed, in our loose way of common speech, to say, "archangels" and "devils," and even some of the liturgies talk about "angels and archangels"; yet there is but one archangel, in the Bible or out of it, and only one devil. Immanuel

is the archangel, Gabriel, Michael, all the same; and Satan is the devil.

But the devil has under his wicked direction and control unreckoned numbers of demons, and they are loose all over this poor world of suffering and exposure. It is easier to explain the story of the ten plagues by admitting that Jannes and Jambres wrought the wonders they did through the agency and power of these living existences — veritable demons; not divine in any sense, but certainly superhuman. We need not say wicked creatures wrought miracles, if the word troubles us; call them anything else we will. But it does explain texts better to consider that Moses was fighting some sort of personalities. God says, in Exodus xii. 12: "Against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment." So in Psalm cvi. 37 it is declared: "They served their idols which were a snare to them; yea, they sacrificed their sons and daughters unto devils." We feel as if we must assume real antagonists when we read Moses' own words in Numbers xxxiii. 4: "The Egyptians buried all their first-born, which the Lord had smitten among them; upon their gods also the Lord executed judgment."

3. Thus, then, we reach our conclusion at which all along we have been aiming. Were Pharaoh's gods real gods? How was Jehovah the "God of gods"? And what does our text mean: "Against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment"? These questions come up now for answer.

Let us begin with quoting the passage in Deuteronomy, as it just now appears with the scholarship of the world behind it in the New Revision: "They moved him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto demons, which were no God, to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came up of late, whom your fathers dreaded not." And now from this we easily draw the quiet proposition that these wonders were wrought by the magicians through a permitted instrumentality of demons, real beings, emissaries of Satan, like those who appear so actively and frequently in the New Testament, the agents in what we term demoniacal possession. And, in order to be perfectly clear before we proceed to the illustration and proof, it is best to call attention to the grand disclosure of God's purpose in the case of this king Menephtah upon which we have dwelt before at length. We ask you to recapitulate in your own minds the delineation made concerning the three cycles of miracles grouped around the three personages who stood on a certain occasion on the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus Christ, Moses, and Elijah, each the bringer of a dispensation of revealed truth for men's salvation, the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel. It is sufficient to say, here at the start, that this same onset of demoniacal forces is disclosed in each of these cases, and a recognition made of the fact that the old fight with Satan was

renewed, the old fight which began in the Garden of Eden. Demoniacal possession is found in these same three cycles of time, and nowhere else in the history of the Old Testament or the New. Immanuel took up that predicted contest with the devil just where it had been dropped by our first parents. The second Adam assumed the struggle precisely where the first Adam left it, and began to publish the plan of human redemption with a revelation of an atonement to be made by Christ. So he confronted the adversary, his right foot on the sea, and his left upon the earth, his hand holding a book open in the sunshine, like the apocalyptic angel.

Now, it is not necessary for me to adduce instances from the history of Christ and the apostles to show the truth of this proposition. The air seems full of legions of demons as we read the life of our Redeemer. It is not dementia; it is not epilepsy; it would be preposterous to say our Lord transferred insanity or fits to a herd of fleeing swine; it was a legion of demons that asked to be sent with daring entreaty. And so later: we remember the experience of Paul and Silas at Philippi. Then there was Simon, a witch and sorcerer, in Samaria. In Ephesus there was a costly and vast bonfire of magical books; and Barjesus was a false prophet and sorcerer in Paphos. These are enough.

But perhaps some of you have not paid so much attention to these disclosures as they meet you in

the seventy years of history around Elijah. The date of Saul's adventure with the witch of Endor is a little earlier, but it rests naturally within the same cycle. For indeed Samuel was one of the prophets. This appearance of sorcery and demons becomes so frequent a thing that enactments have to be made forbidding the consultation of wizards and necromancers by the people. King Saul had to do what, with much better grace in the sincerity of performance, Josiah did afterward: "Moreover, the workers with familiar spirits and the wizards, and all the abominations, did Josiah put away." So Isaiah denounced the "wizards that peep and mutter," the "charmers," those "that have familiar spirits." The vile king Manasseh personally "used enchantments and witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit and with wizards." All such history reads like the history of the Gospels, and like the history of the Acts, in the matter of demoniacal possession.

This, then, is what is intended when we say that this was a contest between Immanuel and Satan, a positive resumption of the war from the instant when "the seed of the woman" began to bruise the serpent's head. So, when we return to the story we are studying, we are bold to say that this whole contest between Moses and Menephtah was really the sublime and awful conflict between Immanuel and Satan for the slavery, on the one side, for the salvation, on the other, of the race of human souls whom the Almighty had originally

made in his own image. It rose far above the mere brick-yards of Goshen, above the palace of Zoan; it takes lofty rank beside the temptation in Paradise and the temptation in Gethsemane; it is the strife between Immanuel and Satan always.

Several most welcome explanations, therefore, meet us just here. One is concerning the abrupt cessation of performances, on the part of Pharaoh's magicians, when they exclaimed, "This is the finger of God." They knew that the resistance was virtually over. We may even imagine that these people had sometimes been surprised already at what actually seemed their own power. There are indications in the later account of the witch of Endor that she was astonished and frightened, when the awful form of the dead Samuel came up at her incantation; we are somewhat sure she never expected just that as a result of anything she did in her usual way. So here these two magicians may have felt alarmed when they told Menephtah that the miracle they could not imitate was a strong proof of superior supernatural force somewhere. We notice that the king replies with not a word. Pharaoh knew in that instant that a stroke had fallen on him out of high heaven. He was beaten on his own ground when he learned that his trusted gods could only make frogs and not remove them. Here was a yet more serious failure; for they showed that they could not now even do the disastrous things Moses was doing,

much less relieve the plagues afterward; this was "the finger of God."

It was time the silly wrestle should end; the divine forbearance was exhausted; the covenant was pressing for fulfillment; the parade of useless destruction helped no one, and hurt many innocent people. The Almighty put forth his power and tranquilly suppressed the magicians, as well as silenced the demons behind them. The showy performance was closed. The scene makes us think of Jesus Christ in the New Testament challenging the demoniacs, and commanding them to come out of the sufferers they possessed. We are not left to hazard conjecture here; the explanation is given by the apostle in one of his epistles. The allusion is all the more significant and interesting because he is writing about modern skeptics, and using the incident only as an illustration: "For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was."

Then there is a second explanation furnished by this disclosure. We know now why this history has such an evangelical spirit attributed to it when references are made in the New Testament. Read

over again, in the light of such an understanding of God's true purpose, the story which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives concerning Moses' choice in his early career; see how singular is the motive ascribed to him: He took his stand as a believer in Jehovah Jesus as his Redeemer: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." The New Testament writer identifies the two dispensations as the same. Israel was the Church, Jehovah was Jesus; so Moses became a Christian.

In the same way the allusions made to the incidents of the later history become intelligible. You recall the terrible trouble from the fiery serpents; put with that now the exhortation of the apostle Paul: "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." He here says that Christ was the one who was tempted in that murmuring; it was Christ who was leading Israel through the wilderness. That is the meaning of Paul's remarkable words elsewhere when writing to the same church, drawing an illustration from this history: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized

unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ." It was Christ, again, who was with that people when the cliff-side was smitten for water. There never has been but one Church, but one Leader of God's elect, but one Redeemer, but one way in which to be saved.

Hence, finally, this explains why it is that, all along the ages, the same old foolish questions keep coming up and gendering strife. A tedious sameness characterizes the attacks which the skeptics, ancient and modern, constantly make. The reason is found in the fact that the old serpent Satan is behind each one of them, and is trying ceaselessly to reverse his repeated defeats, and establish the former issues.

Hence there is no originality, not even enough to be interesting or vivacious, in the prating of the unbelievers around us in these later times. These things have all been said before. The days are moving along safely; the end will come before many seasons have waned; it will be better to have been on the right side than on the wrong. This ancient Exodus was repeated in the time of Jesus Christ. When on that Mount of Transfiguration, where the three great Leaders were standing, Moses and Elijah and Jesus talked together, it was concerning, not his death as an incident or an experience, not his decease as a departure, but

concerning his "exodus"; that is the wonderfully significant word, not apparent in our version, but known to all scholars in the Greek as the Evangelist employs it. Jesus was going to effect a grand deliverance for his spiritual people from the bondage of Satan in the hour of his death and resurrection. It was in this that Moses was interested; for it was his conflict with the same adversary, now repeated. It was in this that Elijah likewise was interested; for it was his conflict with the same adversary, now repeated. Hence the theme was common and sublime as they conversed about it, all shining in the glistering glory of the heavens where the crowns were in waiting for the victors.

Thus always Satan has been defeated; thus always he will be. No legions of demons can save him; no colleges of magicians can help him; no Pharaohs, no Ahabs, no Herods, can deliver him; Immanuel is his unfailing master, and will in the end bruise his head in the dust. Why do men keep up the silly fight any longer? Look at these pitiful mummies that come up from the grave just at the moment when ribald tongue after tongue is trying to undermine the Pentateuch. Ah, if these lips could speak, they would say: "Better let Moses alone; better let Exodus stand untouched; there is an awful power somewhere behind all that; there is a tremendous God who fights for those things; you will get an unexpected overthrow before long; for Jehovah is the Lord God of gods,

the Lord God of gods; he knoweth, and Israel he shall know."

O thou fellow-man of mine, whoever thou art, listen to me for an earnest moment to-night. Commander or subaltern, aged veteran or new recruit, this battle with the forces of evil is far higher in its tremendous issues, far deeper in its awful reaches of might, than spirits of even brave men imagine. "Two kingdoms divide this world, Immanuel's and Satan's." Hast thou, like Immanuel, bathed thy sword in heaven? Hast thou a knightly purity that comes only of grace and pardon? Thou hast sinned; thou art a sinner; art thou forgiven? The devil seeks thee in his host; hast thou enlisted under the Archangel? If thou art ever among the conquering ones, thou wilt have a crown; but the finest thing thou wilt ever do with that will be to cast it at Immanuel's feet.

XII

PHARAOH'S HEART HARDENED.

And the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.—Exodus iv. 21.

PERHAPS there is nothing in this whole story of the Exodus which is more bewildering to the common mind than the frank declaration made in the outset, that all parley with Pharaoh on the subject of his immediate surrender to Jehovah would be a failure; it would come to naught in the end, because God himself was going to harden his heart.

Something has to be done with this, first or last, and it is all a foolish hesitancy that holds the preachers back from proper explanation. There are times when one should say devoutly with the psalmist: "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child."

But, on the other hand, there are times when it is no part of even the modestest and most rever-

ent public instructor to reject from a fitting and exhaustive notice any truth that is clearly revealed; most certainly he must not plead as his apology for shirking responsibility that some subjects involve intricate relations between individuals and God which lead to perplexing results, and must not be questioned. God may be suffered to take care of himself, and of Moses, and of us, too, if only we are willing to trust him. Least of all need we be frightened in prospect of possible cavils. It is false shame to shrink from proclaiming exactly what the Scriptures assert; why are we ever timid? Even Paul had once to say, "Esaias is very bold"; but he stood by him.

Now we are in the midst of a history full of trouble. It thunders all around the sky at once. And it so happens that the common intellect fastens always upon the most difficult doctrines earliest, and perversely, although perhaps really innocently, groups around them its first forms of reasoning about duty. Often there is nothing more truly practical than an impracticable theory. One cold, dark night may be the influence that congeals and settles a whole life-history of a man. And yet there is no such thing as cold, and no such thing as dark; only deficiency in heat and deficiency in light makes the disaster. A human mind demands rest in an intelligent understanding of the inspired word as it moves on; if light is wanting, it is blinded; if heat is wanting, it is chilled; it asks for logic and cries out for love.

In this particular case both of these elements appear to be conspicuously absent. There is no logic in holding a king like Menephtah responsible for resistance when the God that made him is stiffening an ugly temper into awful obstinacy all the time in his heart. There can be no love in hurrying him on into desperate rebellion by unseen spiritual pressure, or mysterious processes of discipline which render him a hopeless antagonist of an omnipotent foe. We recollect that in Bunyan's story of the pilgrim Christian was shown a fire upon which water was constantly flung, and yet the flames always rose higher; the servant then took him around behind the wall, and there he saw another attendant who kept pouring in oil which supplied fresh fuel. In this openly disclosed dealing of the Almighty God with Pharaoh the processes seem reversed, but the suggestion the same; with one hand as it were, plagues are let fall upon the king, and with the other his soul is fed with violent opposition just because of them, and this is all on purpose. It is avowed as the divine plan from the beginning to the end.

Now from the very first one of these lectures I have seen questions in the distance, which I knew would have to be answered. Drawing nearer and nearer, they have steadily confronted me in the way. It is certainly high time that this one of them should have some disposal of it attempted at least. How could Menephtah justly be held responsible for sin if God was constantly hardening his heart, as he said he was?

I. Let us inquire carefully for the real facts in this case lest we make the mistake of caviling against what has never been stated.

1. In the book of Exodus, where the record is found, we discover just nineteen places in which the hardening of Pharaoh's heart is spoken of; I hope it will not seem tedious to quote these in exact terms.

The first of them is contained in the commission of Moses, as he went to the palace in Zoan with a demand for Israel's release (iv. 21): "And the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in thine hand; but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go." Then next we have the message he is to bear, Aaron with him (vii. 2, 3): "Thou shalt speak all that I command thee; and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt." Next, when he does his errand (vii. 13): "And he hardened Pharaoh's heart that he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said." To this attention is called (vii. 14): "And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go." Now the plagues begin, and Moses is confronted with the magicians (vii. 22): "And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the Lord had said."

The sixth instance is at the pause after the plague of frogs (viii. 15): "But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said." Then we have the same thing after the plague of the lice (viii. 19): "Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said." Then after the promise of Moses to the king that he would go away and pray for him, and the answer (viii. 32): "And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also; neither would he let the people go." Now comes the murrain upon the cattle, and Israel is in safety (ix. 7): "And Pharaoh sent, and behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go." Then even the king's friends complain of the grievous pains (ix. 11, 12): "And the magicians could not stand before Moses, because of the boils: for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had spoken unto Moses." Two more instances occur after the thunderings and the hail (ix. 34, 35): "And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of

Israel go; as the Lord had spoken by Moses." At this point Moses is commissioned to enter once more into Pharaoh's presence with a fresh warning of a heavier judgment still (x. 1): "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants; that I might show these my signs before him." Once more, after the locusts (x. 20): "But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go." Then Pharaoh temporized, and promised he would let them go if only the cattle might be left behind; Moses refused, because he would then have no beasts for his sacrifices (x. 27): "But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go." Just here in the story there appears something like a pause; and Moses makes a statement as to the uselessness of the contest so far (xi. 10): "And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land." After a while the escape was made; and now there are two texts that in similar terms record the prediction made, and its fulfillment (xiv. 4, 8): "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord. And they did so, and the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of

Israel; and the children of Israel went out with an high hand." This is repeated, and the reason is annexed to it afterward (xiv. 17): "And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honor upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen."

2. These are the only instances we find in the story of the Exodus. It is needed now that we submit them to a very careful analysis. In eleven cases out of the nineteen God is distinctly declared to have done the hardening; in three cases Pharaoh is said to have done it for himself; and in the remaining five it is only announced as being done.

Furthermore: Pharaoh begins it, but God ends it. And, most significant of all, the hardening, as the conflict advances, is more frequently attributed to God alone, and at the last seems to drop entirely into his hands. In seven verses out of the final eight we are told that the act of hardening was sovereignly and wholly God's. It is eminently clear, therefore, that Pharaoh was perfectly unconstrained and free when Moses entered his palace, and that God did not harden him against himself to begin with. There was no implacable omnipotence, no irresistibleness of divine decrees, no awful and inscrutable pressures of purpose, which stood in the path of Menephtah's immediate surrender of his will to Jehovah's will, and his letting those poor abused Israelites go, as the

Lord bade him. We may as well come to terms at this very point. It is intolerable to be compelled to argue with any skeptic who insists that God set an impossible thing before Pharaoh to do, a thing which his own sovereignty had rendered impossible at the start in the conflict, and then simply damned him to eternal punishment afterward for not doing it. That does not appear in this book of Exodus anywhere; it has not been stated; it is not true as a matter of fact.

It is very dull business to parse and give definitions out of an ancient dictionary here in the pulpit. But it has to be stated that a distinction is made in the use of three words with different meanings, as this story runs on. The New Revision has in most cases given great help by the fresh rendering. One of them means to bind or compact, so as to harden; that is the active word employed in these chapters. The next one means to make heavy; that is, to hang or bear one's own heart heavily down into sullenness and stupid obstinacy. And the third signifies in a very general way to grow hard, or as to one's mind or will to become stubborn and uncontrollable. In the first two instances, in which only the language of prediction is employed, the Lord uses those two words that refer to the beginning and the end of the contest; when the demand is made, he tells Moses that Pharaoh's heart will grow disobedient and stubborn; when the miracles have begun to exasperate him and inflame his bad pas-

sions, then he, God himself, will keep right on with the unyielding demand, backed with more painful plagues, and this will bind or compact Pharaoh's heart into a sullen resistance more and more foolish and malignant in its utter obstinacy. This will be evident as the history will proceed; this is the prediction made now.

Thus we come to the veritable history; what did happen? Tracing these words out through all the sacred narrative, we find that, in the first seven instances where the expression occurs, Pharaoh is declared to have so stiffened his own temper into obstinacy, that (in the joint rendering of the Septuagint and the Vulgate) his "heart resisted." It was not till then that we are told that the Lord hardened his heart in the use of the word which signifies actively influencing him in his open rebellion. And please remember that this was after his own magic-workers of wonders had surrendered, crying out that the miracles Moses was bringing forward were beyond their art, and must be wrought by the finger of God. They went to their infuriated master and counseled him to give up the contest, to repent and submit to Jehovah. It was as undoubtedly possible for Menephtah at that moment to repent and be saved as it was for his servants. And they did repent, and said, "Let these men go and serve Jehovah their God; knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?" The king would not listen; he grew more spiteful than ever, as his friends deserted him. And

now for four times in succession the story lets loose on us that strong word, and we are told, until an uneasy tingling is felt in our ears, that "the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart." Up to this instant, Menephtah's will was unconstrained at all events. He had his own way, and he diligently stiffened his neck.

But what happened after this? How did God harden Pharaoh's hard heart into any deeper hardness? What did he really do? Precisely the same things he had been doing all along. The plagues proceed; and now we are informed in the same terms that Pharaoh hardened his own heart; and then that God hardened his heart; and so the bell keeps tolling on until the final catastrophe is reached in the grand overthrow of sin.

These, then, are the facts of the story. It cannot be denied at the best that some things are difficult as Moses states them; but candid readers will be constrained to acknowledge that the strife of commentators and the cavils of objectors have done more still in the creation of confusion. There is nothing here certainly to frighten a devout mind, and the history almost piques us into curiosity. The sense of mystery in the particulars invites us to persistency of study.

II. We pass, therefore, to the consideration of some aids in our interpretation, which are calculated to clear our intelligence. It is a wonderful fact that these later discoveries which have added

so fine a chapter to Egyptian annals give us admirable help in the work of explaining the intricate processes of this experience of Menephtah. Let us take up here now just a few considerations that come in order.

1. Begin with this: a story of the hardening of any man's heart, in the Old Testament or the New, must be understood as belonging solely to the kingdom of grace and providence, as distinct from the realms of nature or politics. It must be judged by the immutable laws of divine government in the universe. It is of no use to try to work up an impetuous sympathy in behalf of this one man, and say he never had any fair chance, when pitted against such a being as God. Who says he ever did, or ever had any right to expect such a thing? Who is Jehovah? And who was Menephtah, son of Rameses the Second? The will of God, as the Supreme Governor of this world, and the worlds around it, never is allowed to be confronted on equal terms by the will of any one of that race of creatures he brought into being — save in reference to his own soul's loss or salvation. The omnipotent Maker of the universe is not one to answer a challenge addressed to him by an ant or a minnow, by a seraph or a Pharaoh. And the issue then was concerning a race of persecuted slaves whom Menephtah did not own, as against Jehovah who owned them four centuries before Menephtah was born. We drop him as king of Egypt; the heart-hardening was not political but personal,

and it must be investigated as amenable to spiritual laws in every particular.

2. So we reach a second consideration: the political issue which forms the groundwork of the story was the occasion, not the cause, of the outbreak and the final catastrophe in this case. Pharaoh was king in one realm where he was permitted by Jehovah to be as independent as himself; that realm was in his own nature. His own soul was a smaller kingdom; but, within its borders, his sovereignty was absolute as that of God in heaven. God never seeks to force a free-willed man to enter paradise, nor even on earth to come to him for grace or love. The issue in this case was clear from all entanglement and mystery. It will not do to say that the king was under a disability because of some unseen form of influence exercised over him, such as that he could in no wise resist. The late discovery of mummies is helpful just here in an unexpected and strange way. It sweeps off at one brush of the hand an amazing amount of mere sentimentalism. The sovereigns of this period, like living pictures in history, come forth into reality of life: thus we learn we have a right to submit them to the same judgments that men always have to meet. Pharaoh is no longer a dreamy creature up in the air, as Scripture characters too often seem to be; this king is a man, and a very coarse man at that; his father's mummy is over in Cairo and his grandfather's alongside; he is a nephew of Thermuthis, the be-

nevolent woman who saved Moses; he is the son of Rameses II., and his name is Menephtah. And if you could go up to him now, and speak to him the words you think likely to influence him, you would say: "The thing for you to do is just this: let those Hebrews go; you have no claims upon them; four hundred and thirty years of injustice and cruelty are gathering retributions around you; you have not a shadow of right over one of them; they came into your country as strangers, on invitation given by the king; they were as truly free-born as yourself; they were forced into slavery by treatment inhuman and indecent; all laws, human and divine, are against you; give your consent to their departure, and thus stop these awful plagues; do you not see that you are defeated on your own ground?" And now suppose a courtier should just whisper to you in your ear: "Poor Pharaoh! he cannot let them go now; the more you press him, the more you harden his heart; can you not see that?" And in the candor of your soul you answer, "Why, I was only trying to soften it."

3. Hence a single remark more: in subduing Menephtah the Lord of heaven did nothing but what was calculated to do him good. He hardened Pharaoh's heart, you insist. But what did he do? Precisely what a very child might know he would have done, and would have had to do, if he had sovereignly purposed to soften it. The facts here become positively poetic in their jus-

tice. God did to Pharaoh exactly what he in the beginning did to Moses, and for the same purpose. You recall that when Moses was in Horeb, he was suddenly summoned to come to the leadership of the Hebrews, and return to Egypt. He was unwilling; he answered the Lord that he would not do that. God bore patiently with the petulance, but at last told him peremptorily he must go; and again the man refused, and went into daring rebellion, just as Menephtah did, in the time of his summons to surrender. Then the Lord commanded the insubordinate Moses to cast his rod on the ground, and it would become a serpent; then to put forth his hand and seize it, and it should become a rod again. This Moses did; and he was instantly subdued by the miracle, and went on his errand to the king's palace. And there he simply did the same thing over, as the Lord commanded; but instead of subduing Pharaoh, the miracle made him angry, and hardened his heart. It softened Moses' heart, it hardened Pharaoh's; was the Almighty Jehovah bound to stop doing such things because men differed so perversely? A fair mind is forced to admit that God hardened this king's heart in no other sense than giving him the occasion to harden his own. The awful contest began on a merely political issue; it soon became a moral one, and before long it was spiritual altogether. It is useless to say the same thing over and over: "Pharaoh could not surrender and submit, for God had hardened his heart." This is not true, for eventu-

ally Pharaoh did surrender and submit, and even hasten Israel out of the country.

It is time to end the discussion which this story suggests. The illustration of God's dealings with human beings the world over, which is offered in it, has a bearing as wide as the race and the ages. The same conflict is repeated by multitudes of men; God stands confronting a will set in resistance against his. We comment on the folly, and in each case condemn the sinner. God seeks to subdue by all the kind and merciful means within his power; what more could he do? He brings out a series of disciplinary judgments; and now the man's heart is harder and harder. Who does the hardening? God's kindness exasperates, God's severity irritates the heart into wrath. God's doing is the occasion; man's doing is the cause. The man is responsible for it, not God.

The old saying with its exquisite figure is found in a commentary of Theodoret, where he says: "The same grace of the same God has on men the effect of softening some and hardening others, according to the temper of their hearts beforehand; as the same heat of the same sun in the noontide will be found to soften the wax and to harden the clay."

XIII

PHARAOH RAISED UP.

And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.— Exodus ix. 16.

IN founding a discourse upon this text, we are first concerned about the explanation of the words. The expression, "I have raised thee up," has had almost as many interpretations as there have been commentators on the Pentateuch. The margin adds as a substitute, "made thee to stand": but this would seem to need as much exposition as the other form of speech; and still the New Revision has adopted it bodily: "for this cause have I made thee to stand." Then some have rendered it, "I have called thee into existence." In one translation we find, "I have raised thee to a throne," and in another, "I have brought thee forward in history"; then in another, "I have created thee a vessel of wrath"; and in still another, "I have restored thee from this affliction." In some instances the expositors keep the connection very close with historic needs around it: "I have kept thee alive through these plagues," or, "I have continued thee as my adversary," or, "I have

aroused thee up into rebellion." None of these have seemed to give satisfaction; a few, indeed, have awaked almost a storm of opposition and caviling.

Especially when the famous parallel passage found in the Epistle to the Romans (ix. 15–18) has been quoted in elucidation, the violence of unregenerate men has often exploded into spite and rejection: "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for the same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

Really this exposition of the New Testament ought to have quite the lead, and it deserves a much more respectful recognition; for Paul the apostle had the gift of inspiration and spoke as moved by the Holy Ghost. But some persons have not scrupled to cry out with a quick and impatient inference: "Then God dealt with Pharaoh sovereignly in order that he might fiercely exasperate and anger him, and then drown him in the Red Sea, and then hold him up to execration, and then damn him!"

Hence it should bring a measure of comfort to Menephtah's champions to learn, as most of us

have by this time, that the Scriptures do not say that he was drowned, or that he was damned either. And, indeed, ribaldry is not argument, and too much indignation does not conduce to clearness. From all we can find out from a careful comparison of what Moses wrote with what Paul added in his letter, it would appear that a paraphrase like this might represent the truth: "I selected thee for a strong and illustrious example of human insolence in power, its capabilities for wickedness, and the certainty of its final doom; and this I did in order that I might prove my own supremacy over the creatures of my hand, and thus declare my name in all the ages of the world."

Paul has only reiterated what Moses wrote in the Exodus. The truth is, that, since we have found these mummies and so learned that Pharaoh was not a mere imagination, a man of straw, set up for theologians to battle about, but a veritable old tyrant of the meanest and cruelest kind that ever defiled the earth, it has become rather unromantic, even for those that hate God worse than he did, to stand up for him in debate. These inscriptions on the stones, and these histories written on the papyri and on the rolls of linen bandaged around the kings, are clearing up the air a little, and the controversies are growing milder as the skeptics find out what a poor miserable villain they are obliged to champion. Let us read over this small part of the chapter anew: "And the Lord said

unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth. For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?"

Observe here that this king was perfectly intelligent concerning what Jehovah asked of him: "Let my people go, that they may serve me." That was the demand. Does any one say he could not let them go, if he tried? It was a simple measure of political economy; he would lose an unreckoned number of valuable slaves. So he made up his mind that the conflict must come on; he would not let them go. But there was in the struggle more than mere political economy; from the beginning it is an undenied fact that he knew it was God with whom he was contending; he was bracing himself for a fight which meant life or death. He did not attempt to interfere with Moses or Aaron; he knew his battle was never a moment with them, but with the Almighty God who stood

behind them in the challenges they brought. No secret dealing with him was practiced by God or by Moses; no hidden unrevealed reprobation at this early period certainly was urging him forward. He understood that his refusal of obedience was open defiance; and he does not appear to have been in any measure abashed by the thought of it; one might almost detect in his demeanor a kind of exhilaration in the prospect of war.

Bear in mind that this monarch had every reason for being satisfied to have those disaffected people leave the kingdom. He hated the sight of them; he despised their natural and traditional occupation as shepherds; he was so afraid of their influence that he began, like his predecessors, to thin them out by the murder of the male infants. Menephtah was not a building man by taste, and had no special regard for the kind of labor these poor creatures would be able to bring to him.

Then remember that he was solitary in his resistance. The notable characteristic of his court seems to have been the absence of such a creature as is usually found, to whom history gives the name of "the king's favorite"; this Pharaoh had no favorite. No maneuvering minister appears anywhere in the story, putting him up to malicious things. He could have swept Moses and Aaron out of the palace and out of existence with a word. But he fully understood that he was concerned with their God, Jehovah, in whose name they continually addressed him.

Keep this in mind, also: his people stood ready for a swift consent. They said all they dared to say. Their sympathies were against their sovereign. We notice in the story more than once that they were siding with the Hebrews. Josephus quotes ancient Egyptian authorities as saying that all the kingdom desired Pharaoh to utter his decree for their immediate departure. They were selfish in it, of course; it was not for love of them; indeed they called them a "nation of lepers"; it was for fear of them and in detestation of them. And, by and by, the multitudes of Egyptians hurried them off, and gave them jewels of silver and jewels of gold to get them more swiftly out of the land.

Why, then, did Menephtah take his stand in defiance of all? The real reason must be found in his wish to try his gods against Israel's God; the issue, at first only economic, at last became only spiritual. Those who exercise their sympathy so extensively about this monstrous despot, steeped in conceit and superstition, and who claim that he was treated unfairly and had no chance, ought not to forget that Menephtah was permitted to choose his own forms of contending with Moses. Their weapons were miracles, and the orders of the Hebrew leader were issued in such slow details that for a while the king was able with his magicians to meet the demands of a very respectable rebellion in show. It is inexcusable for men to keep talking about God's giving the wicked a chance more or less; he always gives them the

freest chance to surrender to him and obey him; and he waits sometimes mysteriously long when he is giving them a chance to dispute and defy him. Satan even, in the presence-chamber of heaven, had the best chance there was to serve God, and the best chance on earth to repent and return to his allegiance if he wished to do so. Adam had the best chance human nature was capable of receiving for retrieving his sin; and Cain had the next; and Pharaoh had all the chance there was, if he ever desired to do God's will.

But enough of this. It is more to the point now that we enter on an explanation of this expression about Pharaoh's being "raised up" as an exhibition of God's power and supremacy. For years of injustice in administration of the government, of tyranny in treatment of the Israelite working-people, and of superstitious idolatry in his worship, it is clear that Menephtah had been known and read of all men. Just then it pleased God to teach Israel, his chosen people, a lesson of dependence upon himself; he determined to show his complete and irresistible supremacy over any one and every one else who was in a position to defy him. The government of Israel was a theocracy; that is to say, God in person was the king of it, and Moses was the earthly representative before the people. He therefore needed a conspicuous antagonist. Menephtah was chosen. God might have selected the king of the Philistine nation or the Amorite; it is likely both were as bad as

Pharaoh. What he did do was to choose this king of Egypt, the descendant of some awful generations of miscreant tyrants—himself as wicked as the worst. He had endowed him with a resolute determination, with a dauntless intrepidity, a credulous faith in his priesthood, an imperious will. In the field, away from his palace comforts and the soft praises of adulation in the court, this man lost his reputation for courage and stability somewhat, if we are to trust the secular history that is coming lately to light. But there in his throne-room, his pride all inflamed by the public character of the contest between him and his slaves, Menephtah would be likely to display the very qualities which would render him the actual ideal of an antagonist with Jehovah before the eyes of the Hebrews whose minds and hearts the Almighty planned to impress. He had thus been created and fashioned for the Lord's exact purpose.

Does any one find fault with this? Was it wrong for God to make such a man, and then hold him responsible? It is enough to say, for a reply, that God created Moses with almost exactly the same endowments, with many of the same characteristics, gifted, peevish, high-tempered, irritable, strong-willed, magnificently intellectual, indomitably resolute and courageous; does any one blame God for having made and fashioned such a man as Moses? Rightly ruled and wisely used, great gifts are priceless in value; perverted, they become instruments of ruin. A few years

later on, we find Moses subdued, obedient, humble, gentle, a man so meek that inspiration made a proverb out of him for the ages to repeat and teach to the children. Pharaoh had the same chances as he.

This king, Menephtah, the Lord took when he was at the height of his power. He kept him alive; he endured his defiance; he preserved a balance in his mind so that he should not go insane; he gave him an unbroken season of health; he guarded against any useless or unhelpful insurrection in his realm; he patiently bore with his blasphemy. Then as the conflict grew more malignant, instead of cutting this rebel off in the midst of his daring impiety, God kept giving him more and harder disciplines — all calculated, mind you, to do him good, if he would only accept and improve them to good; thus kindling anew his passions with fresh fuel. The purpose seems to have been just to draw this one man out, to exhaust his tremendous powers and capabilities to the very utmost, so as to have the Hebrews understand that no king, not even at the highest conception of force and tyranny, was or could be a match for the great Jehovah who was their king and their God. In this sense Pharaoh was "raised up," so as to become a recognized sinner for times and races in the unborn future, a shining shame before the world.

If anybody wishes just here to thrust in some theological difficulties, it ought to be enough to

answer that Pharaoh was already that kind of sinner which has been called "a reprobate," when God began the conflict with him in behalf of the Israelites. The key to this entire story is found in the fact that the king had had his personal and final issue with the God whom he now defied. He was an idolater, a pagan worshiper of the sun, a believer in magic, and a follower of demons at the moment when Moses and Aaron entered his audience-room. He was out of the reach of grace, a child of wrath then. God might have punished him by opening the ground and sending him through the rent into hell, as he did Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. He might have smitten him with a loathsome and fatal disease, as he did Herod, or struck him down in an instant, as he did Ananias and Sapphira: it was easy enough to get rid of this Pharaoh. But the Almighty was just taking his chosen people a mighty journey away into the wilderness of new and terrible experience lying beyond the Red Sea; they must be taught to trust him and respect his law, as a thing of life or death with them body and soul. Hence a fresh and unexpected use for this blasted trunk of a tree, Menephtah; a great beacon-light could be hung out upon its branches, to be looked at in imagination all through the forty years of the wandering tribes.

Where, then, was any unfairness shown by the great God? In this exercise of his high prerogative of free agency, that imperious Egyptian

demanded the unquestioned, unresisted, undiminished dominion over himself and his destiny. This was simply granted by Jehovah; it seems as if the Lord had said: "As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him; as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him." Menephtah does not stand alone in history, by any means. Cain, Saul, the king of Israel, Sihon, Belshazzar, Judas Iscariot, had a similar trial of human will against the divine. These men were conspicuous; not all men are as much so; but all have the same human nature. Indeed, most of us are distinctly conscious of being perfectly unconstrained in all of our moral decisions. We should say, each one of us, if the inquiry were raised, that there never was a moment in all this man's career in which if he had turned and repented, he might not have been saved, no matter how far on in his guilt he might have advanced: so it seems now to ourselves. There is a theological doctrine called reprobation; the truth appears to be that at some period in the controversy with a human soul, God does judicially withdraw his Spirit, and then there is a solemn crisis reached for the experience of hardness; it looks as if a man could not repent, could not be saved, beyond that line of defiance and despair. Now, everything the Lord does to save a good man, if done to this reprobate, only makes him worse. How can that be helped? The free will is kept up, and the sovereignty does not yield. There is no defense, so far as can be dis-

covered, against the power of an unrighteous man to make a vicious perversion of God's most generous dealings. "What if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" Must our Maker cease to be good and kind because wicked people abuse his forbearance? Ships need winds for honest commerce; there is no help for it, however, if pirates put up sails and so get wafted along on the way to murder. Wise men must employ fire each day for human necessity; there does not seem to be anything that is able to keep incendiaries in the night from flinging brands into buildings; must fire be forbidden by the Government? Does any one think of a method of preventing Pharaoh from hardening his heart when God began to do the same things to him with which he had just softened Moses'?

What would men have God do with such difficult rebels? Whichever way he acts, they seize a fresh opportunity to harden their hearts. We have seen fathers have the same perplexity with dissipated sons and wayward daughters. They give them wise counsel; and that makes only a new outbreak. They give them more money, or they withhold what has up to this time been a generous allowance; and the more they give to them the worse they are, and the more they keep back from them the worse it grows. They plead with them to come home, and that makes them angrier than before. They forbid them the house, and that makes them rail out in spite more than

ever. How could God treat this Menephtah, anyway?

Why not crush him at once, and not harass him with delays? Then Egypt would have cried out in reproaches. All the world, living along since, would have objected if Menephtah had been sunk in the Nile at the moment when it began to grow red as blood under the first miracle. If the Almighty were to let loose his irresistible power on every violent blasphemer the instant the impudent defiance should be uttered, a pitiful soul would say, "It is harsh, harsh! give the creature another chance!" But now, on the other hand, would it have been a more amiable or a more popular decision, if God, mysteriously against his will, had constrained Menephtah to be a gentle and good man — compelled him positively to let Israel go when he did not purpose to do it — and, even after that, saved him in heaven in despite of himself, and inspired an intelligent apostle in the Epistle to the Romans to exclaim in rapture as he thought of the sovereignty of Jehovah, who had crowded Pharaoh up into the ranks of the redeemed by his omnipotence: would that have absolutely satisfied our modern cavilers? Is it a fair, sweet picture, as it rises before our imagination, attractive and beautiful, when our eyes seem to see this defeated Menephtah, heated, flushed, boisterous, still defiant, hurried into celestial mansions, furiously insisting as he rises that mere almightiness is overpowering him, and protesting against sover-

eignty that drags him helpless through the gates of pearl!

Meantime we leave Egypt and end our talk about Pharaoh. For we know in our own souls that we care not a silver groat about Menephtah for his own sake; it is a battle for ourselves that we are fighting in this championship of him. The Nile flows on unconscious; the palms in the shadows know nothing of our troubles; the mummies lie there in the Museum; we are neither helped nor hindered by any one of them. Pharaoh must take his chances as best he can; something seems said to us: "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God?"

There is a reprobation before death. The sentiment is not accurately true as some persons sing it; it is not always sure that "while the lamp holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return." For in his heart there may be a hardness that will hinder him forever from coming to ask for a pardon through Jesus Christ, and that is essential.

After this point is reached, however, God goes right on doing as he did before. God never does

anything to any soul with the intention of hardening it. He never "raises up" any man for the sake of casting him down again into hell. He has a right to choose as much as we have in any case. He chose Moses instead of Menephtah, and Israel instead of Egypt; he had mercy on whom he would have mercy. He had a right to do to Pharaoh what he did to Moses; and if what he did to soften Moses softened Moses, and if what he did to Pharaoh to soften him was exactly what he did to Moses, yet it hardened Pharaoh, who was to blame?

The ancient Thracian emblem of the Deity was a sun with three of its broadest beams proceeding from it: of these, one rested upon a sea of ice and was melting it; another, on a cliff of rock, and was causing it to flow; the third, on a dead man's body, and was rousing it to life. Now, just imagine each one of these, or any one of these, was so free-willed as to be able, and so spiteful as to wish, to resist, so a new chill went into the ice, and a fresh hardness into the rock, and a deeper corruption sunk into the dead body; would the warmth-giving and life-giving sun be to blame, if it still went on shining as before?

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